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THE HINDU

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

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BENGALURU
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NEARBY

Uniform Khata for all properties recommended

BENGALURU

It has been recommended that all properties in the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) area may be given Khata/PID (property identify numbers) after collection of improvement expenses.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 2

KIA's footfall leaps to 16.28 million

BENGALURU

After being hit by the first wave of COVID-19, the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) saw a big jump in passenger traffic and air traffic movement in the financial year 2021-22. The footfall has increased from 10.91 million (2020-21) to 16.28 million (2021-22).

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 5

ACB probe ordered against IAS officers

BENGALURU

A special court has directed the ACB to conduct an inquiry against three former Principal Secretaries of the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department and three others to ascertain the allegations that they had caused a loss of ₹269 crore to the exchequer by misappropriating public funds during 2009-15.

KARNATAKA ▸ PAGE 8

OPPORTUNITIES ▸ PAGES 6 & 7

Act against communal hate, SC tells two States

Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh told to take preventive steps

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday turned the heat on BJP-ruled Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh to take "corrective measures" against the peddling of communal hate in *'dharam sansad'* events and warned that the Chief Secretaries of the two States will be held responsible for any "untoward statements" made during these programmes.

A Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar said the Chief Secretaries, Home Secretaries and the police in these States were "bound" to stop hate crimes and follow the preventive and punitive measures against hate crimes laid down by the Supreme Court in its judgments.

"We want to see you take corrective measures... These events do not take place overnight. Advance notice is given... Please explain what preventive action you have taken, and did you take action against those responsible after that?" Justice Khanwilkar addressed the State counsel for Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal said a *'dharam sansad'* was scheduled at Roorkee in Uttarakhand on Wednesday. He showed the court the purported communal statements made by speakers in an earlier event which took place in Himachal Pradesh between April 17 and 19.

> We want to see you take corrective measures... These events do not take place overnight. Advance notice is given... Please explain what preventive action you have taken, and did you take action against those responsible after that?
> JUSTICE A.M. KHANWILKAR

"They are not taking action despite judgments from this court... These events are happening in different places," Mr. Sibal submitted.

'FIRs filed'

Counsel for Uttarakhand said FIRs had been filed in the case of earlier events of similar nature. He said two communities "who are at loggerheads with each other" were both holding such events. The State had taken action in the past without any communal bias. He said preventive action against untoward statements being made in the Roorkee event were under way. "We do not know what they will say in their speeches... But we are taking steps... Your Lordships may have faith in us," the lawyer said.

"There is no problem of trust... The doctrine of trust is applicable 24x7. But we want action and we want to see you take corrective measures and not explain yourselves here in court," Justice Khanwilkar responded.

The Uttarakhand lawyers said the "community he (Mr. Sibal) is trying to protect is also holding events".

"This is not the way you (State of Uttarakhand) present yourself here... And if you are so confident about yourself, we will hold your Chief Secretary, Home Secretary and Inspector-General concerned responsible," Justice Khanwilkar said sternly.

The court ordered the Himachal Pradesh Home Secretary to file an affidavit by May 7 on the action taken, in terms of the Supreme Court judgments, against those responsible for making hate speeches in the State.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 12

More COVID jabs for children get nod

Corbevax and Covaxin cleared for emergency use

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

Amid an uptick of fresh COVID-19 cases in the country, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) on Tuesday approved the emergency use authorisation for two anti-coronavirus vaccines in children between five and 12, senior officials in the Health Ministry said.

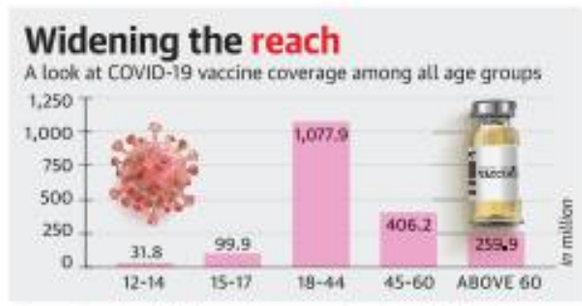
The move comes at a time when several State governments are re-implementing COVID-19 protocols.

Biological E's Corbevax has been approved for administration in children between the ages of five and 12 and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin has been approved for restricted use in emergency situations in the 6-12 age group.

Currently, Bharat Biotech's inactivated whole virion vaccine is being administered in children aged 15-18, and Biological E's protein sub-unit vaccine in children between 12 and 15 under a national COVID-19 immunisation programme. The DCGI has also cleared ZyCoV-D's two-dose regimen for children aged over 12. The second dose of the vaccine can be administered on the 28th day.

Dr. Sharvil Patel, MD, Zydus Lifesciences said: "The approval of a two-dose regimen for ZyCoV-D is a welcome development. This will increase the compliance of the vaccine and reduce the overall time required for vaccination to improve immunity against the virus. It will also help in administering the vaccine in a larger population in a shorter time which is always desirable in the midst of a pandemic."

Approval by the DCGI for Corbevax and Covaxin comes following recommendations by the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) on COVID-19 of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).



CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 12

Draft of new IT law likely to be out in May

NISTULA HEBBAR
YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

In the first step towards overhauling of the two-decade old IT Act, the government will put up the draft of the proposed legislative framework for public consultation as early as next month, Minister of State for IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar told *The Hindu*. "The concept note and what we propose will be out as early as May," he said.

INTERVIEW ▸ PAGE 13

Nearly 3 lakh citizens yet to take second dose

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

As the State prepares for a potential fourth wave, around three lakh citizens are yet to take the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Now, the health staff from the different primary health centres (PHCs) have been tasked with the responsibility of contacting these individuals and convincing them to take the vaccine.

K.V. Trilok Chandra, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) Special Commissioner (Health), told reporters here on Tuesday that the health officials were also going to the houses of those who have not taken the second dose to convince them and administer the dose as well. "There still seems to be resistance. We are convincing them to take the second dose. We are also following up on those who are eligible to take the precaution dose," he said, adding that the BBMP has administered around 7-8 lakh vaccine doses over the past two months.

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 4

Look beyond Ukraine crisis: Jaishankar

DINAKAR PERI
KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

Addressing the annual Raisina Dialogue here, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said the citizens of the world are getting affected by events, such as the pandemic and violence, and reminded the Western guests that there are other challenges in the Indo-Pacific region and that they should look beyond the crisis in Ukraine.

FULL REPORT ▸ PAGE 12

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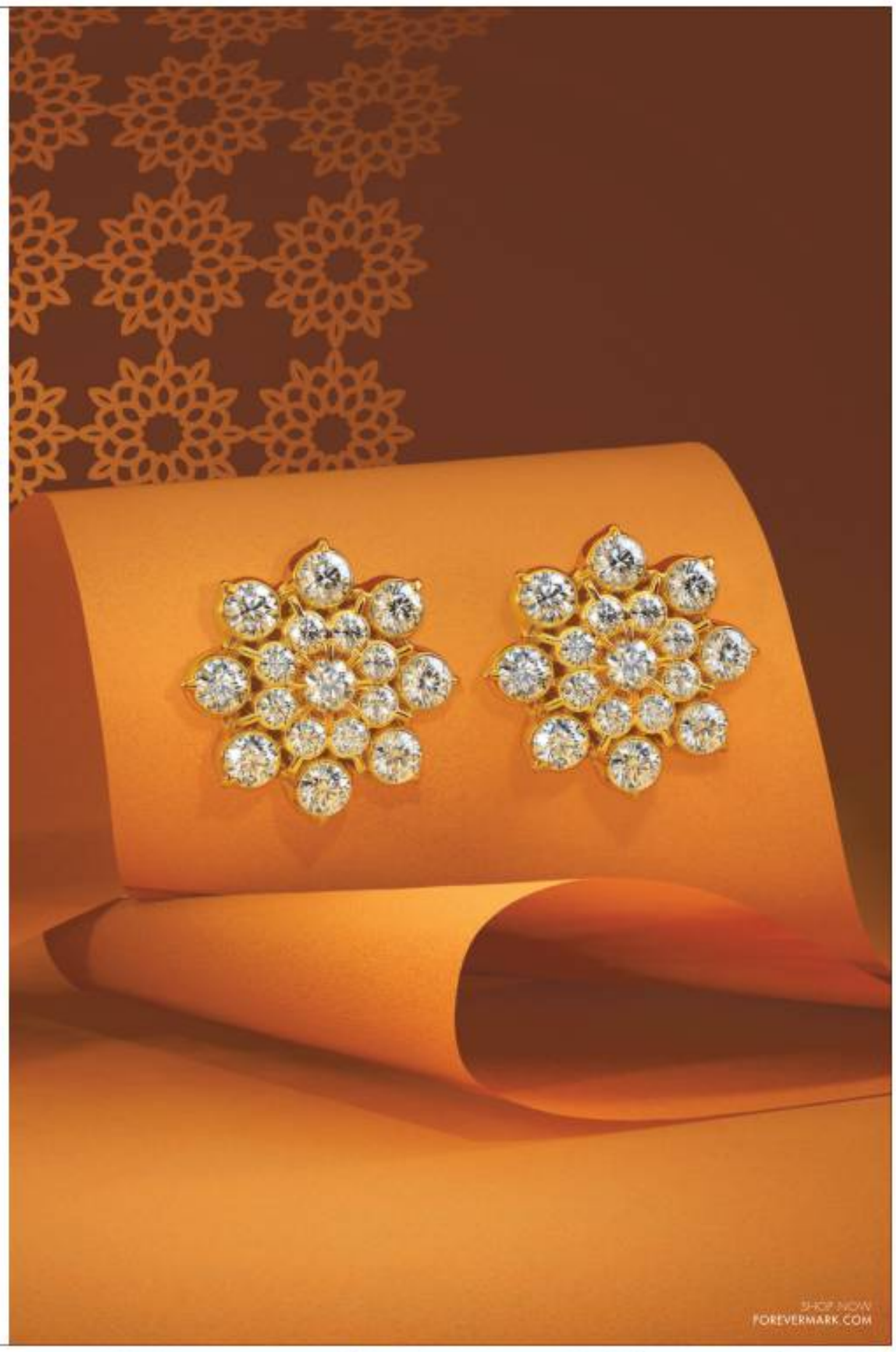

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THE HINDU

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NEWS IN NUMBERS

Real estate growth

65,000 In ₹ crore, the expected growth of Indian real estate (RE) by 2040, according to a report by consultancy firm CIRIL. By 2025, the sector is expected to contribute 13% of the country's GDP (Gross domestic product). In 2019, the size of the RE market was ₹12,000 crore. Despite fears related to the Omicron crisis, the market in 2022 looked bullish while demand is accelerating across all categories, the report added. PTI

Switching sides

279 The number of candidates who switched parties during the 2022 assembly polls, out of which 27% left the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and 13% left the Congress for other political outfits, according to poll rights body Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR). The National Election Watch and ADR analysed the self-sworn affidavits of the candidates and 85 MLAs, who changed parties during 2017 to 2022 and contested the polls in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa and Manipur this year. PTI

Foreigners visited

32.79 In lakh, the number of foreigners to visit India in 2020, despite the country's long spell of nationwide lockdown and other restrictions due to the pandemic, according to the annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs 2020-21. The maximum number of foreigners who visited India during this period was from the U.S. (61,190) followed by Bangladesh, the U.K., Canada, Portugal and Afghanistan. Other countries include Germany, France, Republic of Korea and Iraq. PTI

Precaution doses

4.64 In lakh, the number of precaution doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered to people between the age groups of 18 and 59, according to the Health Ministry data. On Monday alone, 46,962 vaccinations were administered. Over 2.64 crore precaution doses have been administered to healthcare workers, frontline workers and to those aged 60 and above so far. The countrywide vaccination drive was rolled out on January 16, 2021, with healthcare workers getting inoculated first. PTI

End politics of hate

108 The number of former civil servants who have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to call for an end to what they termed as "politics of hate" allegedly practised by governments under the BJP's control. The open letter said that they were witnessing hate-filled destruction in the country where Muslims, other minority communities and the Constitution itself were in danger. Former Lt. Governor of Delhi Najeeb Jung and former National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon, are among the signatories. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

EXPLAINER

India's designation by the USCIRF

What is the USCIRF? Which other countries have been labelled as a 'Country of particular Concern'?

SAMPATH G.

THE GIST

- In its 2022 Annual report, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has recommended that India be designated a 'Country of Particular Concern' (CPC), i.e., the category of governments performing most poorly on the religious freedom criteria.
- CPCs are countries which either engage in or tolerate "particularly severe violations" of religious freedom. A total of 15 countries have been recommended for the CPC designation.
- The USCIRF's decision is not binding on the U.S. government. The State Department and its Office of International Freedom (IRF), takes into account other diplomatic, bilateral and strategic concerns before making a decision on a CPC designation.

The story so far: In its 2022 Annual report, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has recommended that India be designated a 'Country of Particular Concern' (CPC), i.e., the category of governments performing most poorly on religious freedom criteria. It has also called for "targeted sanctions" on individuals and entities responsible for severe violations of religious freedom by freezing those individuals' or entities' assets and/or barring their entry" into the U.S.

What is the USCIRF and how is it constituted?
The USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan body created by the International Religious Freedom Act, 1998 (IRFA) with a mandate to monitor religious freedom violations globally and make policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and the Congress. It is a congressionally created entity and not an NGO or advocacy organisation. It is led by nine part-time commissioners appointed by the President and the leadership of both political parties in the House and the Senate.

The USCIRF, in its annual report, states that in 2021, "religious freedom conditions in India significantly worsened

According to the IRFA, commissioners are "selected among distinguished individuals noted for their knowledge and experience in fields relevant to the issue of international religious freedom, including foreign affairs, direct experience abroad, human rights, and international law."

What does a 'Country of Particular Concern' (CPC) designation mean?
IRFA requires the USCIRF to annually identify countries that merit a CPC designation. As per IRFA, CPCs are countries whose governments either engage in or tolerate "particularly severe violations" of religious freedom, which are defined as "systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion".

The other designation, for less serious violations, is Special Watch List (SWL)

Which other countries have been designated as CPCs?
For 2022, based on religious freedom conditions in 2021, a total of 15 countries have been recommended for the CPC designation. They include India, Pakistan, Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Syria and Vietnam. Countries recommended for a SWL designation include Algeria, Cuba, Nicaragua, Azerbaijan, Central African Republic, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Turkey, and Uzbekistan.

Why does USCIRF want India to be designated as a CPC?
The USCIRF, in its annual report, states that in 2021, "religious freedom conditions in India significantly worsened."

Noting that the "Indian government escalated its promotion and enforcement of policies –including those promoting a Hindu-nationalist agenda – that negatively affect Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, and other religious minorities," the report observed that "the government continued to systemise its ideological vision of a Hindu state at both the national and State levels through the use of both existing and new laws and structural changes hostile to the country's religious minorities."

It highlighted the use of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) against those documenting religious persecution and violence, detailed the creation of "hurdles against the licensure and receipt of international funding" by religious and charitable NGOs, and observed that "numerous attacks were made on religious minorities, particularly Muslims and Christians, and their neighborhoods, businesses, homes, and houses of worship". It also criticised the spate of fresh anti-conversion legislations, noting that "national, State and local governments demonised and attacked the conversion of Hindus to Christianity or Islam."

Taking into account all these aspects, it concluded that India met the criteria of "systematic, ongoing, egregious" violations of religious freedom and therefore deserved a CPC designation.

Zero tolerance: Residents shout from behind a bolted iron gate during the demolition of Muslim-owned shops at the Jahangirpuri neighbourhood, in New Delhi on April 20. • AP

Are USCIRF recommendations binding on the U.S. government?
No, they are not. The USCIRF typically recommends more countries for a CPC label than the State Department will designate. This happens because the USCIRF is concerned solely with the state of religious freedom when it makes a recommendation, but the State Department and its Office of International Freedom (IRF), although mandated by IRFA to factor in religious freedom in the framing of foreign policy, also takes into account other diplomatic, bilateral and strategic concerns before making a decision on a CPC designation.

Is this the first time India is being designated as a CPC by the USCIRF? What has been India's reaction?
This is the third year in a row that India has received a CPC recommendation. India has in the past pushed back against the grading, questioning the locus standi of USCIRF. In 2020, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar called the Commission an "Organisation of Particular Concern."

What is the likely impact of the USCIRF's recommendation?
The U.S. State Department hasn't acted on such recommendations so far. But India may come under greater pressure this time, given its divergence from the American position on the Ukraine war and refusal to endorse U.S.-backed resolutions against Russia at the UN.

While the USCIRF's suggestion of targeted sanctions may be a non-starter, its other recommendation – that the "U.S. Congress should raise religious freedom issues in the U.S.-India bilateral relationship and highlight concerns through hearings, briefings, letters and congressional delegations" seems more likely to fructify.

EXPLAINER

For free speech through paid subscriptions: Elon Musk's Twitter takeover

Why is the world's richest man going after the social media platform? What are the changes that he proposes to bring about?

P.J. GEORGE

The story so far: Elon Musk is one of Twitter's most effective and prolific users, with over 80 million followers. Now, if all goes according to plan, he will also own the platform by the end of the year. On Monday, Twitter's Board of Directors approved a $44-billion buyout offer from the Tesla and SpaceX CEO, in which the world's richest man has included $21 billion of his personal fortune. Once the deal is approved by the U.S., EU and other regulators, Mr. Musk will be able to take the company private, essentially giving him free play over how it makes money, and how it handles issues of free speech as a social media platform. While at his previous ventures Mr. Musk has been very successful at adding hundreds of billions of dollars in market capital, there have been indications that at Twitter, his aims may be rather different.

How is Twitter doing as a business?
Twitter has always been a conundrum for investors. In everything from geopolitics to Tamil film fan fights, it holds an outsized influence on how the narrative unfolds. However, its stock is currently trading at just above $50, not too far from its 2013 IPO price of $26. This is sub-par for a period in which the NASDAQ index grew nearly four-fold, and where Meta aka Facebook, which had its IPO in 2012 at $38, went on to trade at over $186.

It has been a struggle for Twitter to find a business model that can effectively monetise its weight in the global discourse. While we often mention it in the same breath as Facebook and Google, Twitter is much smaller than these behemoths in terms of market capital. This is mainly because while Facebook and Google are able to distil user data to point advertisements at us with almost disturbing accuracy, Twitter never developed a viable advertisement model.

What changes has Mr. Musk suggested to the platform?
So far, Mr. Musk's statements on possible upgrades to Twitter have included clearing out bot networks, making the algorithm open source, and having a subscription service. By making the algorithm open source, he says, users will be able to track how and why a tweet has shown up on their timeline. He has also suggested that Twitter could have an 'edit' button. These have not been seen as particularly pathbreaking ideas to improving Twitter's business.

Why is Mr. Musk interested in Twitter?
Just a day after his offer to buy Twitter, Mr. Musk said on a TED stage that his offer was not about making money but about free speech. As a self-proclaimed Twitter 'edgelord' – whose tweets at times exist on the edge of what is acceptable – Mr. Musk has often described the platform as a "de-facto public square"; this is an analogy that he repeated in his statement after Twitter accepted his offer.

The "de-facto public square" alludes to the free speech rights guaranteed in public forums under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. While the question of whether a privately-owned platform can be a public forum remains, Mr. Musk seems intent on bringing his "free-speech absolutist" ideas to the platform.

What is Twitter's track record on moderation?
Social media companies such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube that rose to occupy our lives in the early half of the last decade, often portrayed themselves as the new digital public forums that fostered free speech and hosted content of all political colours. However, they lost much of their charm as misinformation, propaganda, and trolling took over. Twitter has faced criticisms over the existence of vast bot networks on the platform that amplify hate speech, including in India. It has also been criticised for poor content moderation that allowed the spread of misinformation, affecting real world events. Twitter's biggest test was the presence of former U.S. President Donald Trump on the platform, whose tweets often carried proven misinformation. Twitter finally removed Mr. Trump after the January 6, 2021 Capitol Hill riots, citing glorification of violence in his tweets. A question that has now risen is whether, with his focus on free speech, Mr. Musk will make way for Mr. Trump's return to Twitter.

Mr. Musk's own use of Twitter has also come under much criticism; he once called a critic of his a paedophile, and has also often been sexist in his messages. The work culture at his other venture, Tesla, has also been questioned over allegations of racism. If in his bid to 'free-up' speech further on the platform, Mr. Musk allows misogynist and racist trolls to persist, analysts fear that this may further isolate users and advertisers.

THE GIST

- On Monday, Twitter's Board of Directors approved a $44-billion buyout offer from the Tesla and SpaceX CEO, Elon Musk which included $21 billion of his personal fortune.
- It has been a struggle for Twitter to find a business model that it can effectively monetise because, unlike Facebook and Google, it never developed a viable advertisement model.
- Mr. Musk said that his offer for Twitter was not about making money but about free speech. Mr. Musk has described the platform as a "de-facto public square", which alludes to the free speech rights guaranteed in public forums under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

Hookah bars likely to be banned in city

City corporations have been tasked to come up with policy

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The State Government is formulating a policy to ban hookah bars across Karnataka, found more in numbers in Bengaluru, Mysuru, and Mangaluru.

Following a statement by Home Minister Araga Jnanendra in February 2022 that the Government is mulling over a ban, city corporations that are the licensing authorities in the cities have been tasked to come up with a policy to ban the same.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has commissioned a study by health and legal experts to formulate the policy for the ban. "We are awaiting the report by the experts since we need to consider all legal repercussions before finalising the policy. Based on the report, we will take suitable action soon," K.V. Trilok Chandra, Special Commissioner (Health), BBMP.

> We are awaiting the report by the experts since we need to consider all legal repercussions before finalising the policy. Based on the report, we will take suitable action soon.
>
> K.V. TRILOK CHANDRA, Special Commissioner (Health), BBMP

Presently, the city corporations have issued licenses to hookah bars in hotels where there is a separate smoking zone. Once the ban is put in place, the civic body will withdraw licenses it has issued till now and there will be a complete ban on hookah bars, sources said.

However, many unlicensed hookah bars have mushroomed, especially in Bengaluru, and many of them have become venues for substance abuse, police sources said. "In many hookah bars, instead of tobacco, people use ganja and other psychotropic substances. While a few of these hookah bars are licensed, most of them are not. We have raided several such illegally-run places and shut them down. We cannot go to each hookah bar and check what they are smoking. It is preferable they are banned," said a senior police officer.

However, the State Government keen on the ban wants to ensure it is strongly backed by law, after the recent debacle of its attempt to ban online gaming backfired in the Karnataka High Court, sources said. The Government of Karnataka had recently amended the Karnataka Police Act, 1963, and criminalised online gambling and gaming. However, the High Court struck it down in February 2022. The State Government has challenged the order in the Supreme Court where it is pending.

Uniform Khata for all properties recommended

'Operational guideline and executive order yet to be issued'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Owners of B-Khata properties can heave a sigh of relief. After years of deliberations, it has now been recommended that all properties in the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) area may be given Khata/PID (property identify numbers) after collection of improvement expenses. This decision was taken at a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary P. Ravi Kumar held recently.

Though first proposed in 2018, lakhs of citizens are still waiting for the civic body to regularise their properties from B-Khata to A-Khata. Since 2008, BBMP, following directions of the State Government, has not been issuing A-Khata (permanent property record) to properties that are in violation of Government regulations. For such properties, for the purpose of tax collection, a separate register was created - B register - and properties under this have come to be known as B-Khata properties.

Sources in BBMP said that to delink the Khata issue from Akrama-Sakrama, which is still pending before the Supreme Court, the State Government had amended the Karnataka Land Revenue Act, 1964, in March 2018.

The high-level committee, chaired by Additional Chief Secretary, Urban Development Department, had suggested restricting regularisation (issuing A-Khata to B-Khata properties) with the payment of improvement charges to just vacant sites and not sites with buildings. As per estimates, there are nearly 5.7 lakh B-Khata properties in the city, of which at least 1.4 lakh are vacant sites.

Llakhs of citizens are waiting for the civic body to regularise their properties from B-Khata to A-Khata. • FILE PHOTO

What is B-Khata property?

Properties that are in violation of Government regulations are registered under 'B' register. Those in the register are called B-Khata properties.
Properties under the 'B' register are either those in unauthorised layouts or on layouts formed on revenue land, buildings that are in violation of the BBMP's building bylaws, and buildings constructed without building plan approval.

Civic chief Gaurav Gupta, while confirming the development, said that while the meeting had recommended issue of khata to all properties, an operational guideline and executive order is yet to be issued. Sources in BBMP's Revenue Department stated that the Khata would be issued after collection of land conversion fee, penalty, compounding fee for the development authority concerned, and building plan approval fee, as recommended by the administrative reforms committee.

"The improvement charges were initially fixed and ratified around eight years. There now is another proposal pending with the Government recommending a slightly higher fee. The Government is yet to take a call," the source said.

In its budget, the BBMP seemed to be banking on Khata regularisation and has estimated a revenue of ₹1,000 crore from this source.

Ex-restaurant staffer held on charge of raping cow

The accused hails from Jharkhand

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Mahadevapura police have detained a former restaurant employee for allegedly raping a cow at the shed belonging to his employer in Hoodi on Sunday.

Based on a complaint by Vivek Govindaraj, owner of the restaurant, the police on Tuesday tracked down the accused, identified as Kishan, and questioned him.

According to the police, Kishan, who hails from Jharkhand, joined the restaurant a month ago and quit four days ago.

On Saturday, Kishan ventured into the cow shed and assaulted a cow. A few girls staying in a paying guest facility close to the shed noticed this and informed the PG owner, who in turn alerted Vivek.

The police have registered a case of unnatural sexual offence against Kishan and have detained him for further investigations.

COFMOW (INDIAN RAILWAYS)

E-TENDER NOTICE No. 54, DATED : 27.04.2022

PCMM/COFMOW's Office invites e-Bids for the following **STORES Tenders:**

Tender No.	Brief Description	Closing Date
OP-110271	Combined Shearing, Punching, Cropping & Notching Machine.	09.05.2022
OP-07207005D	Procurement of Grit/Shot Blasting Plant & Machine.	13.05.2022
OP-409610	Skin Tensioning Workstation.	17.05.2022
OP-712941	Welding Fixture & Manipulator.	20.05.2022
OP-110760	Hydraulic Press Brake, Cap-400T.	23.05.2022
OP-110451	Toy Train (Battery Operated).	23.05.2022
OP-311080	Supply and Fitment of UHF RFID Tags on Wagon Over Indian Railways.	27.05.2022

Bidders may visit the website www.ireps.gov.in to download the tender document and submit their e-Bids. No manual offers shall be accepted.

CORRIGENDUM, DATED : 27.04.2022

Following corrigenda have been issued to e-Tenders already uploaded on the website www.ireps.gov.in:

Tender No.	Corrigendum No.	Closing Date
OP-911170	Corrigendum No. 02	28.04.2022
G-107151	Corrigendum No. 03	24.05.2022

Bidders may visit the website to download the details mentioned in the corrigendum and submit e-Bids accordingly.

"Serving Customers with Smile"

Works of coastal artists on display

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANGALURU

Mangaluru-based Art Kanara Trust has organised 'Oneself and The Other-Self - Transposing Experiences', a first-of-a-kind exhibition of paintings, sculptures, and photographs by 15 coastal artists on an invitation from Gallery Charubasona in Kolkata.

The exhibition began with an exclusive preview session on April 23 and it will remain open till April 27 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. A delegation of coastal artists, comprising Rajendra Kedige, Harish Kodialbail, Janardhan Havanje, and Reshma Shetty, is attending the event. The delegation is led by Subhas Chandra Basu, president of Art Kanara Trust and convener of INTACH, Mangaluru chapter.

Renowned artist Jogen Chowdhury attended the preview session and interacted with the artists.

Helping hand

The police and the public help push a fire engine that faced technical snag near Palace Guttahalli in Bengaluru. • SUDHAKARA JAIN

In two months, e-buses to run on long-distance routes

The BMTC will operate 300 non-AC buses

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) has plans to operate new electric buses (e-buses) on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) and several long-distance routes connecting Majestic. Under the Central scheme, the BMTC will be operating 300 non-AC buses. BMTC officials said the buses will arrive in two months.

The BMTC started running e-buses for the first time under the Bengaluru Smart City project last December. • FILE PHOTO

Buses are likely to be operated on routes such as Hebbal to Silk Board, Banashankari to Yelahanka, Banashankari to Attibele, KBS to Attibele, and Majestic to Bidadi.

"The company has informed us that all the buses will be supplied by October. We have already identified the routes for operating these buses. The reason is that the new buses are 12 metres long and the carrying capacity is higher. To make operation financially viable, we have to run the buses on long routes such as ORR and others," said Surya Sen. A V, director of BMTC.

The official said that the company operating the buses is in the process of setting up required infrastructure at depots in Attibele, Bidadi, and Yelahanka. In addition to this, charging points will come up at places such as Kengeri, Majestic, and Silk Board.

Last December, the BMTC had started running e-buses for the first time under the Bengaluru Smart City project. Though the corporation had received all the 90 buses under the project, the entire fleet size could not be utilised due to delay in building charging points and other infrastructure. The BMTC had identified three depots to run buses at Kengeri, Yeshwantpur, and K.R. Puram. Currently, buses are running from Kengeri and Yeshwantpur. Out of 90, around 50 buses are operational.

In the future, under the Grand Challenge Plan of the Central Government, the BMTC will induct 1,500 e-buses. The BMTC has also approached the State Government seeking financial assistance to shift to e-mobility in large scale using the Central subsidy. Last year, the BMTC had floated a tender for leasing 1,500 buses on lease basis. However, after the announcement on Grand Challenge, the BMTC had shelved the plan of operating diesel buses.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL AT CHENNAI BENCH

COMPANY PETITION NO: CP(CAA)/39(CHE)/2022
Connected With:
COMPANY APPLICATION NO: CA(CAA)/121(CHE)/2021
In the matter of the Companies Act 2013;
And
In the matter of Sections 230 to 240 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act 2013;
And
In the matter of Scheme of Arrangement (Demerger) between **KG Information Systems Private Limited** (Demerged Company), **KGISL Technologies Private Limited** (Resulting Company I) and **KG Invicta Services Private Limited** (Resulting Company II) and their respective shareholders and creditors under Sections 230 to 232 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act 2013

KG Information Systems Private Limited
KGISL Campus 365, Thudiyalur Road,
Saravanampatti, Coimbatore – 641 035, TN
... Petitioner/Demerged Company

NOTICE OF HEARING OF THE PETITION

A petition under Section 230-232 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act 2013 for sanctioning the Scheme of Arrangement (Demerger) between **KG Information Systems Private Limited** (CIN: U72200TZ1994PTC005317), **KGISL Technologies Private Limited** (CIN: U72200TZ2021PTC036903), and **KG Invicta Services Private Limited** (CIN: U74999TZ2021PTC036907), and their respective shareholders and creditors was presented by the petitioner on 02.03.2022 before the Honourable National Company Law Tribunal, Chennai Bench, and the said petition is fixed for hearing on 25 May 2022 (25.05.2022).

Any person desirous of supporting or opposing the said petition should send to the Honourable Tribunal and/or the petitioner's advocate, notice of his/her intention, signed by him/her advocate, with his/her name and address so as to reach the Honourable Tribunal and/or the petitioner's advocate not later than two days before the date fixed for the hearing of the petition. Where such person seeks to oppose the petition, the grounds of opposition or a copy of his/her affidavit shall be furnished with such notice.

A copy of the petition will be furnished by the undersigned to any person requiring the same on payment of the prescribed charges.

Sd/-
M/s. RAMANI & SHANKAR
Advocate for the Petitioner/Demerged Company
152, Kalidas Road, Ram Nagar, Coimbatore – 641 009

Date: 27.04.2022
Place: Coimbatore

PUBLIC NOTICE

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL AT CHENNAI BENCH

COMPANY PETITION NO: CP(CAA)/42(CHE)/2022
Connected With:
COMPANY APPLICATION NO: CA(CAA)/1(CHE)/2022
In the matter of the Companies Act 2013;
And
In the matter of Sections 230 to 240 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act 2013;
And
In the matter of Scheme of Arrangement (Demerger) between **KG Information Systems Private Limited** (Demerged Company), **KGISL Technologies Private Limited** (Resulting Company I) and **KG Invicta Services Private Limited** (Resulting Company II) and their respective shareholders and creditors under Sections 230 to 232 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act 2013

KG Invicta Services Private Limited
S.F. No. 365, Thudiyalur Road,
Saravanampatti, Coimbatore – 641 035, TN
... Petitioner/Resulting Company II

NOTICE OF HEARING OF THE PETITION

A petition under Section 230-232 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act 2013 for sanctioning the Scheme of Arrangement (Demerger) between **KG Information Systems Private Limited** (CIN: U72200TZ1994PTC005317), **KGISL Technologies Private Limited** (CIN: U72200TZ2021PTC036903), and **KG Invicta Services Private Limited** (CIN: U74999TZ2021PTC036907), and their respective shareholders and creditors was presented by the petitioner on 02.03.2022 before the Honourable National Company Law Tribunal, Chennai Bench, and the said petition is fixed for hearing on 25 May 2022 (25.05.2022).

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A copy of the petition will be furnished by the undersigned to any person requiring the same on payment of the prescribed charges.

Sd/-
M/s. RAMANI & SHANKAR
Advocate for the Petitioner/Resulting Company II
152, Kalidas Road, Ram Nagar, Coimbatore – 641 009

Date: 27.04.2022
Place: Coimbatore

PUBLIC NOTICE

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL AT CHENNAI BENCH

COMPANY PETITION NO: CP(CAA)/43(CHE)/2022
Connected With:
COMPANY APPLICATION NO: CA(CAA)/2(CHE)/2022
In the matter of the Companies Act 2013;
And
In the matter of Sections 230 to 240 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act 2013;
And
In the matter of Scheme of Arrangement (Demerger) between **KG Information Systems Private Limited** (Demerged Company), **KGISL Technologies Private Limited** (Resulting Company I) and **KG Invicta Services Private Limited** (Resulting Company II) and their respective shareholders and creditors under Sections 230 to 232 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act 2013

KGISL Technologies Private Limited
S.F. No. 365, Thudiyalur Road,
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A petition under Section 230-232 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act 2013 for sanctioning the Scheme of Arrangement (Demerger) between **KG Information Systems Private Limited** (CIN: U72200TZ1994PTC005317), **KGISL Technologies Private Limited** (CIN: U72200TZ2021PTC036903), and **KG Invicta Services Private Limited** (CIN: U74999TZ2021PTC036907), and their respective shareholders and creditors was presented by the petitioner on 02.03.2022 before the Honourable National Company Law Tribunal, Chennai Bench, and the said petition is fixed for hearing on 25 May 2022 (25.05.2022).

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M/s. RAMANI & SHANKAR
Advocate for the Petitioner/Resulting Company I
152, Kalidas Road, Ram Nagar, Coimbatore – 641 009

Date: 27.04.2022
Place: Coimbatore

Close win: Emmanuel Macron at his speech ceremony after his victory in France's presidential election, at the Champ de Mars in Paris, on April 24. • AFP

FROM THE ARCHIVES

United colours of the 'yellow vests'

As the French state tried to withdraw, it faced an unprecedented backlash

EMILE CHABAL

THE GIST

- The *gilets jaunes (yellow vests)* movement was not led by any union or political party and the protesters' demands were not clearly articulated: some want tax cuts (on fuel), some want tax rises (for the rich), some want more public services, some want more generous state benefits, some want to smash up symbols of capitalism, some want a stronger President and some want all of these things at once.
- The *gilets jaunes* have targeted the French state as both villain and saviour. They have organised groups to protest outside government offices all over the country yet, despite their ire, they also demand redress from the very same state they abhor. They want the French government to lower fuel taxes, cut property taxes, and hire more doctors for rural clinics. This paradox has a long pedigree in French history.
- The biggest danger of these protests is spiralling depoliticisation. Mr. Macron's plunging approval ratings before and during the *gilets jaunes* protests indicates a crisis of leadership which could be capitalised by far-right politician Marine Le Pen.

The French elections have come to a close with Emmanuel Macron gaining a decisive victory against far-right candidate Marine Le Pen but with a reduced voteshare. A closer look will show the complicated nature of the French political landscape strewn with anti-immigrant rhetoric and growing anger of the working class. In this article dated December 6, 2018, Emile Chabal elaborated on these contradictions and complications through the 2018 yellow vests movement.

The sight of flaming barricades and upturned cars in Paris usually sends journalists scurrying to their cliché cupboard. For historically literate commentators, current events in France evoke the storming of the Bastille and the Paris Commune. For the politically minded, they seem more akin to the Popular Front of 1936 or May 1968. And, for those aware of France's difficult colonial past, the spectacle of the police confronting ordinary citizens brings back memories of the Battle of Algiers.

Historical parallels

There is a kernel of truth to all these clichés. It is true that political violence in France follows well-worn patterns that have their roots in the country's revolutionary past. This means that the mere erection of a barricade can turn a tedious protest march into a pseudo-revolutionary action with powerful political ramifications.

It is also true that some of the techniques used in the recent protests in France mirror those used by trade unions. Shutdowns and blockades have been the stock-in-trade of the French labour movement for more than 150 years.

And, yes, after the collapse of the French empire in the 1950s and 1960s, the French police did bring their peculiarly violent methods of control and interrogation back to metropolitan France, with sometimes devastating consequences.

The problem is that none of these clichés really gets to the heart of the so-called *gilets jaunes* (yellow vest) protests that have rocked France for the past three weeks. This is because the protests do not fit the usual historic parallels.

For a start, the *gilets jaunes* movement is not led by any union or political party. No one can say that it is a structured 'movement'. It also seems to combine elements of the right and left – and especially elements of the far-right and far-left – that make an ideological interpretation of the protests awkward.

Most importantly, the protesters' demands are not clearly articulated: some want tax cuts (on fuel), some want tax rises (for the rich), some want more public services, some want more generous state benefits, some want to smash up symbols of capitalism, some want a stronger President, some think the current President is too strong, and some want all of these things at once.

Given this extraordinary dispersion of demands, it is hard to give a fixed reading of what the *gilets jaunes* represent. Instead, it is more useful to focus on the few things that unite them. There are two that stand out.

Double-bind of French state

The first is the obsessive focus on the French state. From the beginning, the *gilets jaunes* have targeted the French state as both villain and saviour. They have organised groups to protest outside government offices all over the country, especially in smaller provincial towns. This has frequently been accompanied by violence and vandalism. Almost all of the protesters agree that the state is not doing enough and has neglected their needs.

This belief has been exacerbated by the imperious attitude of French President Emmanuel Macron. His avowedly statist orientation, his embrace of the hyper-presidentialism of the Fifth Republic, and his fondness for monarchical symbolism have merely stoked the fire. Like an ill-fated king, Mr. Macron has turned anger at the state into anger at his person.

Yet, despite their ire, the *gilets jaunes* also demand redress from the very same state they abhor. They want the French government to lower fuel taxes, reinstate rural post offices, increase their 'purchasing power', cut property taxes, and hire more doctors for rural clinics. They firmly believe that the state can and should fix their problems. The fact that many of the issues at the heart of the protests relate to deep structural imbalances in the French economy makes no difference. The state is held as sole responsible and sole guarantor.

This paradox has a long pedigree in French history. Especially since 1945, the French state has expanded enormously, to a point that French people are comfortable with high levels of state interference in their social and economic lives. The massive subsidies put in place to soften the blow of deindustrialisation in the 1980s further increased this dependence.

Today's demonstrations are a logical outcome of this double-bind: as the French state tries to withdraw, under pressure from European Union-wide austerity politics and its own budgetary overreach, it faces an unprecedented backlash.

Centre and periphery

The second common theme in the *gilets jaunes* protests is their very wide geographical dispersion. In this respect, the focus on Paris has been misleading. What is most interesting about recent events is how spread out they are across metropolitan France and even overseas.

While cars were burning on the Champs-Elysées, thousands of people in provincial France blocked roundabouts, staged sit-ins on town squares, and threw rocks at town halls. Meanwhile, in the overseas territory of La Réunion in the Indian Ocean, the entire island has been brought to a standstill by targeted traffic blockades.

This geographical reach reflects another long-standing structural pathology of the French economy, namely the sharp division between centre and periphery. While urban areas in France have tended to develop better infrastructure and more integrated community structures, the withdrawal of state aid has had the opposite effect in peri-urban and rural areas, and in the highly unequal overseas territories.

In this respect, it is significant that the catalyst for the protests was rising fuel prices. Those most reliant on their cars are those who live farthest from urban areas and do not have access to regular public transport. In addition, there has been a complete policy reversal on diesel fuel. After almost half a century of subsidies, the French state has been taking away financial incentives on diesel since the early 2000s. This is a heavy blow for the 61% of French people whose cars run on diesel, and for the truckers and farmers who were used to getting their fuel on the cheap.

A bleak future

So what can be done? The answer is, probably not much. The most likely scenario is that the protests will peter out due to fatigue, demobilisation and a lack of leadership. It is not clear how, if at all, any political party can capitalise on them, except perhaps for the far-right politician Marine Le Pen, who sees herself as the voice for France's peripheral squeezed middle.

The biggest danger is spiralling depoliticisation. Mr. Macron's plunging approval ratings before and during the *gilets jaunes* protests indicates a crisis of leadership at least as acute as the one that marred former President François Hollande's five years in office.

Not for the first time, the most urgent task facing France's elite is to elaborate a more inclusive political project that will begin to reduce the country's well-documented inequalities.

Emile Chabal is a Reader in History at the University of Edinburgh and the author of 'A Divided Republic: Nation, State and Citizenship in Contemporary France'

A still from the movie *Jane Eyre*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Becoming Jane: 175 years of *Jane Eyre*

How the Bronte sisters gave us alternative versions of childhood and femininity

ANUSUA MUKHERJEE

It could be the opening of a chillingly realistic children's novel. In the very first two paragraphs, the narrator announces that she hates long walks, chilly afternoons, and almost all the adults and children in her vicinity. She is dogged by a sense of physical inferiority, which adds to her mental isolation. The wild intensity of feelings, freely expressed, is typical of childhood, when emotions are still unfettered by social conventions.

But the narrator isn't actually a child – she is an adult looking back and ventriloquising her 10-year-old self at the beginning of *Jane Eyre*. Charlotte Brontë, who published *Jane Eyre* in 1847 when she was 31, seems to have preserved her child self almost intact within her, re-entering it whenever the occasion demanded, so that she could write as a child-adult. In this she is exceptional for while all writers long for this gift, very few possess it.

Terry Eagleton says in a review essay, "There is nothing nice about the Brontës, as there is about Elizabeth Gaskell, for example. They have the voracious demand and implacable sense of entitlement of emotionally deprived children, which in some ways is what they were." Jane is full of a murderous passion, which is at its rawest in Emily's heroine, *Wuthering Heights*' Catherine Earnshaw. Both girls scratch, thrash around and lash out. In the very first few paragraphs of *Jane Eyre*, Jane has thrown a book at her cousin, John Reed, for bullying her. The Brontë sisters seem to have inherited their father's notorious temper, made worse in them by the fact that as women they could not vent it freely. They risked being labelled as mad and laughed at, or worse, if they did.

Born on April 21 in 1816, Charlotte straddled the Romantic and Victorian era, when childhood was a much-discussed topic in literature. While the Romantics idealised childhood, Victorians sentimentalised it. The Brontës did neither. Rather, they saw childhood as a state of abject powerlessness when the child is baffled by the adult world, which controls them. Charlotte knew the black, impotent rage of childhood only too well, having grown up in a motherless household ruled by her volatile father who had packed her off to a school she hated. She poured out her rage in *Jane Eyre*, recalling the daily humiliations of a plain little precocious girl rebuffed by adults and peers.

Angry women

The grown-up Jane is a bit more socialised, but underneath the civil exterior still seethes the angry girl, who must have her hero blinded and maimed, as an indirect comeuppance for concealing his first marriage from her, before she accepts him. The Brontës give us alternative versions of childhood and femininity that are the farthest from the sweetness and light associated with Victorian representations of both. They would probably have easily related to Freud's revelations about the twists of the mind, had they lived that long.

It is strange that there is not much representation of female rage in literature even now. Maybe authors risk losing readers' sympathy if they create an unwomanly female protagonist yelling in anger. The ancient Greeks knew what a dangerous form it could take – think of Medea slaughtering her children. A recent novel that hardly got the attention it deserves is Elizabeth Macneal's *The Doll Factory* (2019), set in Victorian London of the 1850s and about an aspiring artist, Iris, who becomes the muse of a fictional Pre-Raphaelite painter. If the women in Pre-Raphaelite paintings are gorgeous, sullen and boring in their stillness, Iris is gorgeous, sullen and gloriously difficult in her fits of fury.

THE DAILY QUIZ

In the aftermath of the French presidential elections, here's a quiz on French leaders

1 This president features in one of Frederick Forsyth's most celebrated thrillers, as the target of an assassination attempt. A statesman, who rewrote the Constitution of France and is considered the founder of the "Fifth Republic"; name this former army officer.

2 The last President of the influential Republican political club called the Jacobins, this French leader played a vital role in the Republican movement in France in the late 18th century. He was later identified with the violently radical period of the French revolution called the "Reign of Terror". Name him

3 Which French president served the longest tenure of any in the French republic?

4 Born to a French father and a Franco-Indian mother, this cock-fighting loving member of the French party, the Democratic and Socialist Union of the Resistance once ran as the candidate for the seat of "French India" in the French National Assembly in 1951 and won by an overwhelming margin. Later, he was one of the leading proponents of annexation of French possessions to the Indian Union. Name this person who was also the first Chief Minister of Pondicherry.

5 This person served as the President of the Council of Ministers (equivalent to the post of Prime Minister in the Fourth Republic) for a brief period from 1954 to 1955. His government was notable for negotiating an agreement with Ho Chi Minh for French withdrawal from Vietnam and for an agreement for the later independence of Tunisia from France. Name him.

Compiled by: Srinivasan Ramani

◄ Name this legendary French figure (whose death at the stake is depicted in a painting of the same name by Hermann Stilke) and who was sought to be appropriated by all currents of the French polity from Republicanism to Gaullism to even communism. • WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Please send in your answers to the **dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in**

Questions (abridged) and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. This idiom first appeared in Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar* and is used by the speaker to refer to an expression that is difficult to understand. **Ans: Greek to me**

2. This series of seven paintings by Robert Smirke is derived from a famous monologue that features in a pastoral comedy written by Shakespeare in 1599. **Ans: It is derived from the famous monologue 'All the world's a stage' from Shakespeare's *As You Like It***

3. Shakespeare is the third most translated author in literary history. The names of the first and the second most translated authors. **Ans: Agatha Christie, Jules Verne**

4. During the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, boy players (child actors between the age of 8 and 12) were controversial for their frequent appearances in Shakespeare's plays due to this reason. **Ans: Boy players performed the female roles in the play as women did not perform on stage during the Elizabethan period**

5. The name of Shakespeare's wife. **Ans: Anne Hathaway**

6. Th reason why the Lord Chamberlain's Men, a company of actors, was rechristened to 'The Kings' Men' in 1603. **Ans: King James ascended the throne and became the company's patron**

7. This Shakespearean play is always referred to indirectly and never by its name as it is believed to be cursed. **Ans: *Macbeth***

8. The Shakespearean play which has the famous 'gravedigger scene'. **Ans: *Hamlet*; the scene is inspired by Prince Hamlet holding Yorick's skull, saying 'Alas poor Yorick!'**

Early Birds: Shalini Jain| Soumya Mehta| K. N. Viswanathan| Sudhi Agarwal| Anand Coilpillai

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AYUSH Sports Medicine Centre to come up in Mangaluru

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANGALURU

The Union Ministry of Ayush has sanctioned an Ayush Sports Medicine Centre, the first of its kind in the government sector in Karnataka, to Mangaluru.

Dakshina Kannada District AYUSH Officer Mohammed Iqbal said the proposal for setting up the centre was submitted to the Ministry two years ago. The Ministry has now agreed to set up the centre under the National Ayush Mission, he said. The proposed new centre in Mangaluru will be the second Government Ayush Sports Centre to come up in the country. One is already functioning in Thrissur in Kerala, Dr. Iqbal said.

Main motto

The main motto of the new centre, Dr. Iqbal said, is to ensure fitness and provide treatment to sportspersons, using therapies available in the Indian systems of medicine namely Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Sidda, Naturopathy, and Homoeopathy. "The Union Government is giving us support to make use of Ayush therapies to sportspersons, which has remained unexplored," he said.

Ways to stay fit

Apart from ways to maintain fitness, the centre will help sportspersons in preparing diet plans, lifestyle management, injury prevention, boosting immunity, stress management, and body relaxation.

The new centre will also provide natural ways of strengthening body parts for sports, namely volleyball, kabaddi, swimming, and athletics.

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SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Parappana Agarahara police are on a massive manhunt for two persons who threw 970 gm of marijuana concealed in plastic covers into the prison from outside. It was detected by alert security personnel on Thursday night .

Based on a complaint filed by P. Ranganath, Chief Superintendent of central prison, the police have registered a case under NDPS Act and various sections of the Prisons Act, and stepped up investigations to track down the accused.

In his complaint, Mr. Ranganath said the accused, who had come on a motorcycle, threw the banned drugs covered in plastic covers over the high-rise walls into a drain opposite the Quarantine Security Section-02, central prison. The patrolling staff heard the sound and went to the spot around 8.30 p.m. and seized the cover. They rushed out to find two men waiting for the signals. The duo escaped leaving behind the bike.

The Parappana Agrahara jail complex in Bengaluru. • FILE PHOTO

- Parappana Agarahara police are on a manhunt for the men who threw 970 gm of marijuana into the prison.

The vehicle, along with the plastic cover, were handed over to the police for further investigation.

This is one of the common forms of smuggling drugs into the prison, a police officer said.

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Timings
BENGALURU

WEDNESDAY, APR. 27	
RISE 06:01	SET 18:34
RISE 03:39	SET 15:48
THURSDAY, APR. 28	
RISE 06:00	SET 18:34
RISE 04:18	SET 16:37
FRIDAY, APR. 29	
RISE 06:00	SET 18:34
RISE 04:56	SET 17:27

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	25
Mysuru	34	22
Bengaluru	34	23

Bengaluru Today
35°C The weather will be dry. Day will be warm and humid. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
34°C A dry weather is likely. Day will be warm and uneasy. Night also will be pleasant.

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Daily COVID tests to be ramped up to 30K

The target is being increased from the present 10,000 tests per day; focus to remain on ILI, SARI

AFSHAN YASMEEN
BENGALURU

Amid concerns about a possible fourth wave hitting Karnataka in the next few weeks, the State is now targeting at conducting around 30,000 tests daily from around 10,000 being done presently.

Although the State had revised its testing target and fixed it at 30,000 per day in mid-March, the daily tests have not crossed 10,000. Following recommendations by the State's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), a circular on the revised testing target had been issued on March 14.

A BBMP marshal spreading awareness on wearing masks and maintaining social distancing in Bengaluru on Tuesday • K. MURALI KUMAR

Focus on ILI, SARI

State Health Commissioner Randeep D. told *The Hindu* on Tuesday that all districts will be directed to follow the March 14 circular on revised testing targets. "While the daily tests will be increased, the focus will as usual be on all ILI, SARI and primary contacts of the positive cases," he said.

While a target of 15,000 and 5,000 tests per day will be fixed for BBMP and Bengaluru Urban respectively, the remaining 10,000 tests are to be conducted in the rest of Karnataka, he said.

As of now, around 3,000 tests are being conducted daily in BBMP limits. K.V. Trilok Chandra, BBMP Special Commissioner (Health) said that the testing numbers will be increased gradually.

"The testing numbers were low as the number of contacts is also low due to less cases being reported daily. We are expecting some new guidelines after the Prime Minister's meeting with Chief Ministers of all States on Wednesday," he said.

On January 10, the Indian Council of Medical research (ICMR) had issued guidelines on purposive testing for COVID-19. The ICMR had said that contacts of COVID-19 patients do not need to be tested unless identified as high-risk based on age.

Asymptomatic patients

According to the advisory, asymptomatic patients undergoing surgical or non-surgical invasive procedures, including pregnant women in/near labour who are hospitalised for delivery, should not be tested unless warranted or symptoms develop. It said no emergency procedure, including surgeries, should be delayed due to lack of a test. Besides, inter-State travellers also need not be tested.

Despite this, for some time (when the transmission was very high after January 18 in the third wave), Karnataka was doing over 2 lakh tests. In fact, a total of 54,08,790 tests were done in January, the highest so far.

Following that the TAC had recommended that the State should go slow on testing. "Stop random testing and focus only on symptomatic persons," the TAC had said, advising the State to limit the daily tests to 75,000. Subsequently, around 50,000 tests were being done till mid-March after which the numbers reduced to around 30,000.

Sources said the TAC had again in March end advised the State to conduct at least 20,000 tests daily. However, from the second week of April the tests further reduced to less than 10,000 on weekdays and less than 5,000 on weekends.

Focus on travellers

C.N. Manjunath, nodal officer for labs and testing who is also a member of the State's Clinical Experts Committee, said that if the Test Positivity Rate (TPR) starts rising, random testing should be done for international travellers and for those who are in frequent public contact.

"It is difficult to get people for testing as the incidence is still low as of now. But, if the cases start rising our testing strategy should be revised again," he said.

TAC member V. Ravi, who also heads the State's Genomic Surveillance Committee, said it is ideal now to follow the formula of testing 20 contacts for every positive case. "We will have to follow this strategy now irrespective of whether the contacts are symptomatic or not. This is because testing and identifying the infected is the only way to curb the spread," he said.

Tests for COVID-19

Total number of tests	6,58,29,280
No. of tests conducted in 2022 (till April 26)	92,41,858
RT-PCR tests in 2022	71,38,539
Rapid Antigen Tests in 2022	21,03,319
No. of tests conducted in 2021	4,23,91,357
RT-PCR tests in 2021	3,54,36,679
Rapid Antigen Tests in 2021	69,54,678
No. of tests conducted in 2020	1,41,96,065
RT-PCR tests in 2020	1,04,69,262
Rapid Antigen Tests in 2020	37,26,803

Month-wise COVID-19 tests done since March 2020

2020	March	3,031
	April	55,021
	May	2,33,419
	June	3,27,172
	July	7,30,045
	August	15,45,015
	September	20,05,276
	October	30,04,785
	November	31,95,765
	December	29,76,525
2021	January	29,55,772
	February	17,62,845
	March	26,14,401
	April	41,85,815
	May	41,39,969
	June	45,32,767
	July	43,79,771
	August	48,25,040
	September	41,44,481
	October	32,54,084
	November	24,16,705
	December	31,78,389
2022	January	54,08,790
	February	25,44,063
	March	10,59,151
	April (so far)	2,51,149

FROM PAGE ONE

Vaccination: Nearly 3 lakh yet to take second dose

With a few States reporting an increase in COVID-19 cases, the BBMP too is likely to increase targetted testing. Currently, around 4,000 persons are tested every day, especially those with Influenza Like Illness/ Severe Acute Respiratory Infection and those who have been hospitalised. The BBMP had now sought more doctors, swab collectors and data entry operators in the light of the decision to ramp up testing.

"The number of COVID-19 cases continues to hover between 80 and 100 every day. Those who tested positive have reported mild to moderate symptoms, and the number of hospitalisations is less. The hospitalisation is more in cases of those who are unvaccinated and immuno-compromised," he said.

Mr. Chandra said that samples continue to be sent for genome sequencing and soon sero surveillance would also be taken up. He also stated that there was no indication that children will be affected during the next wave.

Urging citizens to follow COVID-19 appropriate behaviour, the special commissioner said more cases were being reported from Mahadevapura and East zones. "Marshals and police personnel have already been directed to create awareness about importance of CAB, especially wearing masks and maintaining social distance, among citizens in crowded areas. In the next phase, fines will be levied," he said.

Meanwhile, speaking in Vijayapura, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said that there was no cause for panic as the rise in COVID-19 cases was only 'minimal'. "Though there has been a sudden increase in the number of cases in eight countries neighbouring India and in some States, there is no cause for alarm in Karnataka," he said, adding that however, there was need for caution.

State reports 85 fresh COVID cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

With 85 new cases on Tuesday, the State's weekly Test Positivity Rate (TPR) touched 1.04%. The day's TPR remained at 1.18% and the total number of cases rose to 39,47,083.

Of the new cases, 82 cases have been reported from Bengaluru Urban alone.

While two cases have been reported from Vijayapura, one case is from Tumakuru. With zero deaths, the State's toll remained 40,057.

As many as 70 persons were discharged on Tuesday taking the total recoveries to 39,05,298. Active cases touched 1,686.

As many as 7,171 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours, including 4,642 RT-PCR tests. With this, the total number of tests rose to 6,58,29,280.

THE HINDU
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Honour for Mangaluru student

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANGALURU

Aren Joy Fernandes, a third-year student of Electronics and Communication Engineering at St. Joseph Engineering College (SJEC), Mangaluru, won the first place in the National Junior Classic Powerlifting Championship that was held at Alappuzha in Kerala.

He set national records in Squat 230 kg and Dead Lift 283 kg amassing a total weight of 653 kg. Alongside re-writing three national records, he also did a 140 kg Bench Press during the event held from April 9 to April 13.

Mr. Fernandes entered sports at a very young age. He has six gold, three silver and two silver medals to his credit in various State, National and International level championships.

MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka undertaking)
O & M Circle, Shivamogga - 577201
Ph: 08182 - 270449 CIN: U40109 KA 2002 SGC 030425

No: SEE/EE(O)/AEE(O)22-23/771-74 Date: 22.04.2022

TENDER NOTIFICATION

MESCOM Invites Tenders for the System Strengthening of distribution system works for following villages under Total Turnkey contract in Bhadravathi Division, Shimogga Circle under "Madari Grama Yojane"

Sl. No.	Village Name	Bid Enquiry No.	Reservation Category
1	Kalahalli	MESCOM/2022-23/EL/WORK_INDENT 1800	SC
2	Mavinakere	MESCOM/2022-23/EL/WORK_INDENT 1801	General
3	Aralihalli	MESCOM/2022-23/EL/WORK_INDENT 1802	General
4	Laxmisagara (Rabberkardu)	MESCOM/2022-23/EL/WORK_INDENT 1803	SC
5	Kambadal Hosur	MESCOM/2022-23/EL/WORK_INDENT 1804	General
6	Komaranahalli	MESCOM/2022-23/EL/WORK_INDENT 1805	ST

The interested eligible bidders may log on to website www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in on or after 27.04.2022.

Sd/- Superinteding Engineer (Elecl), O&M Circle Shimoga

For Power Related Complaints & Assistance Call Toll Free Number 1912

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer (Electrical), BBMP, Mahadevapura Zone, Old Madras Road, K.R. Pura, Bengaluru - 560 036. e-mail: bbmpkrpele@gmail.com

No: EE(Ele)/MZ/TN-01/2022-23 Date: 26.04.2022

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)
(Through GOK e-Procurement Portal only)

The Executive Engineer (Electrical), on behalf of the Chief Commissioner of BBMP, invites **Item Rate** Tenders from eligible tenderers in approximate class registered in BBMP/CPWD/KPWD/Railways/MES/any State or Central Govt. Organisation for the works detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Works	Approx. Value of Work (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD (in Rs.)
1	Emergency Repairs of Furnaces, Scrubber System of Panathuru Electrical Crematorium in Ward No. 149.	5.00	12,500/-
2	Emergency Repairs of Electrical Installations in Panathuru Electrical Crematorium in Ward No.149.	7.00	17,500/-
3	Emergency Repairs and replacements of Electrical Installations of Parks of Mahadevapura Zone.	5.00	12,500/-

Calendar of Events: 1) Tender (RFP) documents may be downloaded from the e-Procurement portal of GOK from **27.04.2022 onwards.** (2) Last date for submission of tender documents: **12.05.2022 before 4:00 pm.** (3) Financial Bids will be open on: **13.05.2022 at 4:30 pm.**

Further details can be had from the office of the above during office hours on all working days or visit e-Procurement portal website: **www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Electrical), Mahadevapura Zone

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19. NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask | Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No.
SWRCNBNCST_03_2022 Date: 22.04.2022.
The under signed, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Name of work	Approx. Value
Manufacture and Supply of 10125 mm 60 kg 1 in 12 Thick web switches to RDSO Drg No.T-6155 along with fittings.	Rs. 8,95,58,135/-

Last Date of Submission of bids:
Up to 15:00 hrs. on 16.05.2022
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Deputy Chief Engineer /Stores/Construction
Bengaluru Cantonment
S.W.Railways | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my client **Mr.K.Reddappa Raju, son of Mr.K.Narayana Raju,** has lost the Original Sale Deed dated 22.08.1997, registered as Document No.6627, of Book I, stored in CD.No.3, in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Kengeri, in respect of the schedule property. My client has informed that inspite of his best efforts he was unable to trace the same and has also lodged an online police complaint on dated 26.04.2022 in respect of the same.
If any Person/s find the aforesaid original Sale Deed dated 22.08.1997, they may handover the same to the undersigned within **10 days** from the date of this publication.

:: SCHEDULE ::

All that piece and parcel of a property bearing **No.26**, katha No.123/1, **Kothanur Village, Uttarahalli, Bangalore South Taluk,** measuring East to West 50 feet, and North to South 40 feet, in all measuring 2000 square feet bounded on:
East by : Property No. 27;
West by : Road;
North by : Property No. 25;
Southby : Road.

SAHAI KUMAR, Advocate
#311, 2nd Floor, 3rd Main, 3rd Phase, J.P.Nagar, Bangalore-560078 Mob : 9845090974

IN THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - II, BENGALURU
Jeevan Mangal Building, 1st Floor, No.4, Residency Road, Bengaluru-560 025

O.A. No. 1462 OF 2019

BETWEEN: M/s. UNION BANK OF INDIA, DEVANAHALLI BRANCH ...APPLICANT
AND
SRI. K.S. NANJUNDA REDDY AND OTHERS ...DEFENDANTS

To, 1. Sri. H.N. SRINATH, Aged about 29 years, Son of Sri. K.S. Nanjundareddy, Resident of Hosur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Chintamani Taluk, Chickballapura-563125 **...DEFENDANT No. 3**
2. Smt. ROJA, Aged about 24 years, Daughter of Sri. K.S. Nanjundareddy, Resident of Hosur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Chintamani Taluk, Chickballapura-563125 **...DEFENDANT No. 4**
3. KUMARI RAJINI, Aged about 20 years, Daughter of Sri. K.S. Nanjundareddy, Resident of Hosur Village, Kasaba Hobli, Chintamani Taluk, Chickballapura-563125 **...DEFENDANT No. 5**

SUMMONS UNDER RULE 23 (VII) DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL AT (Procedure) Rules 1993 TO THE DEFENDANT

Whereas, an Application has instituted as application under Section 19 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993, against you to repay the Applicant Bank a sum of **Rs.1,09,62,478/- (Rupees One Crore Nine Lakhs Sixty Two Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Eight Only),** together with accrued interest @ 11.75% per annum with monthly rests along with penal interest @ 2% in all the facilities, till date of repayment.

You are hereby required to show within 30 days from the date of publication of this summons or **on 27.06.2022 at 10.30 A.M.,** in the forenoon in person or by Pleader/Advocate duly instructed as to why the relief prayed for should not be granted in case of default in your absence.

Given under my hand and seal of this Tribunal on this the 24th day of March 2022.

Registrar, Debts Recovery Tribunal - II, Bangalore.

PUBLIC NOTICE

We are investigating the title of **Mr. C. Nanjemari son of Mr.Chikka Kempanna,** residing at Kundana Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, **("Owner")** to the portion of land bearing Survey No.16/3 measuring 8 ¼ guntas, situated at Lingadheeragollahalli Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, which is morefully detailed in the Schedule hereunder and hereinafter referred to as the **"Schedule Property".**

Any person having any right, title, claim or interest in the Schedule Property must notify the undersigned with documentary proof thereof **within Seven days** of this publication. In case no such notice is received by us within Seven days from the date of publication of this notice, it shall be presumed that the title of the Owner with respect to the Schedule Property is clear, marketable and free from encumbrance/s of any kind whatsoever and no person has any right, title or interest of any nature whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property or any part thereof. Claims or alleged interest, if any, which are not received within seven days from the date of publication of this notice shall be deemed to have been waived and disregarded for all intents and purposes and shall not be binding on our client.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of a portion of **agricultural land bearing Survey No.16/3 measuring 8 ¼ guntas, situated at Lingadheeragollahalli Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District** and bounded on the:
East by : Property belonging to Munegowda.
West by : Property belonging to Jagadeesh.
North by : Graveyard.
South by : Property belonging to Chikkananjundappa.

Malini Raju
JSA, Advocates and Solicitors,
Level 3, Prestige Obelisk, No.3, Kasturba Road, Bengaluru-560 001.
Ph: 080-43503600.
Date: 27.04.2022 Place: Bengaluru

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
OFFICE OF THE SENIOR GEOLOGIST(M)
DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND GEOLOGY,
No. 4, GAGANACHUMBI DOUBLE ROAD,
KUVEMPUNAGAR, MYSORE-570023.
Email: sgmmysore@gmail.com
TEL. NO: 0821-2561240
NO:DMG/SGM/Tender Cum Auction-01/2022-23
DATE:

Tender Notification NO:DMG/SGM/ Tender Cum Auction-01/2022-23

As per Karnataka Gazette notification dated: 04.04.2022 the Senior Geologist, Department of Mines and Geology Mysore is inviting the applications for the grant of Quarry Leases for 06 individual blocks for Building Stone Quarry for the period of Twenty Years (20yrs) in Hasuvinakavalu Village Survey No 448, Periyapatna Taluk, Mysuru District. As per KMMCR 1994 amendment 2016 of chapter IV – A reservation of blocks in roaster system has been done in the District Task Force Committee. Applications are invited to grant above quarry blocks through E-Procurement portal. Interested candidates can submitted their bids through online at http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in. For more information and clarification contact office of Senior Geologist, Department of Mines and Geology, No.4, Gaganachumbi Double Road, Kuvempunagar, Mysore-570023 or Contact Telephone No. 0821-2561240 for information. Note: No newspaper notification shall be given for further service tender process.
Tender Time Table:- Date of Published Tender in E-Procurement portal : **25.04.2022**. Date and place of pre bid conference : **04.05.2022** Office of the Senior Geologist Department of Mines and Geology, Mysuru. Last date of received pre-Qualification tender in E Procurement portal : **13.05.2022**. Date of opening pre-Qualification Technical bids in E Procurement Portal **16.05.2022.**

Sd/-Senior Geologistand Member Secretary
District Task Force Committee (Mines)
Mysuru District.

DPR/DDMYS/MCA/46/2022-23

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE - U.R. RAO SATELLITE CENTRE
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP, HAL Airport Road, Bangalore - 560 017
(Phone: 080 25084177, 4184, 4156)
CORRIGENDUM-II dated: 25.04.2022

On behalf of the President of India, item-rate tenders are invited for the following work:

Sl.No	Description	Details	
1	Name of work	Civil works for installation of coordinate measuring Machine (CMM) at CMM lab at MSA-ISITE Campus, URSC, Marathahalli, Bangalore-37.	Renovation of toilets at Reception 1st floor-C&MG building and Ladies toilet at 3rd and 4th floor Main building at URSC Campus, Vimanapura, Bengaluru-17.
2	E-Tender Notice No.	URSC/C&MG/C/TN/33/2021-22 dated: 14.03.2022	URSC/C&MG/C/TN/34/2021-22 dated: 14.03.2022
3	Estimated cost put to tender	₹ 14.27 Lakhs	₹ 16.32 Lakhs
4	Period during which the tender document can be downloaded.	Extended upto 16.30 Hhrs on 10.05.2022	
5	Last date and time for receipt of tenders	Up to 14.30 hrs. on 13.05.2022	
6	Due date and time of opening of tenders	14.30 hrs onwards on 13.05.2022	

All other details of NIET said above remains unaltered. For further details along with Hindi version in website: **www.isro.gov.in** and download the tender documents from **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.**
Sd/-, Group Director (C&MG)

THE HINDU SCHOOL BUZZ PRESENTS
A Newspaper exclusively curated for School Students

ENSURING ROAD SAFETY FOR PILLION RIDERS

Guardian on Road is a helmet awareness program at schools for pillion riders driven by Gulf Oil Lubricants India Limited in association with The Hindu in School. This is being organised at select schools in Mumbai, Nagpur, Bangalore, Delhi, Lucknow and Chennai. As a part of this initiative, local RTO Authorities or representatives from the traffic police are invited to reinstate the importance of helmets in the road safety mission.

Gulf presents GUARDIAN ON ROAD in association with THE HINDU

This workshop is mainly targeted to reach out to students and parents who use two-wheelers as a mode of transport. Especially during rush hours, parents and guardians may or may not wear a helmet, but they often forget to protect their pillion riders, which is in most cases their children, by not making them wear a helmet. The main objective of this initiative is to create a strong awareness among the student community regarding wearing a helmet during every bike ride because sitting at the back, they are more susceptible to road mishaps. Precautions is always better than cure, and therefore a helmet is of utmost importance and a life safety gear.

At the end of the program, children are made to take a pledge and carry placards with slogans to spread awareness on this important topic amongst others. Helmets are also handed over to the children after the program. Children, being the biggest influencers in households today, are most likely to ensure safety measures of these kinds in their circle. This initiative by Gulf Oil is focused on instigating the habit of wearing a helmet amongst them right from a young age.

For Subscription related queries, please contact Raghavendra Desai :
Handphone:+91 9986196254/Email: desai.rnb@thehindu.co.in

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KIA's passenger footfall leaps to 16.28 million last financial year

Passenger traffic sees growth of 45% in domestic travel, 136% in international

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

After being hit by the first wave of COVID-19, the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) saw a big jump in passenger traffic and air traffic movement in the financial year 2021-22.

The Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), operator of the Airport said compared to 2020-21, passenger traffic saw growth of 45% in domestic travel and 136% growth in international travel. The footfall of air-passengers has increased from 10.91 million (2020-21) to 16.28 million (2021-22). During pre-COVID times (calendar year 2019), the footfall recorded at the KIA was 33.65 million passengers.

In a press release, the BIAL has attributed reasons such as restrictions easing up in the last financial year, higher vaccination penetration and increased economic activities as factors for recovery.

BIAL handled ATM of 1,48,320 including 15,482 international flights and 1,32,838 domestic flights in 2021-22 • FILE PHOTO

Air Traffic Movements (ATMs) witnessed a recovery of 64%. The airport handled an ATM of 1,48,320 that included 15,482 international flights and 1,32,838 domestic flights. The highest number of ATMs were recorded on December 19,2021; on that day, the airport handled operations of 590 flights. On other hand, the highest number of single day pax (air passengers) was witnessed on December 24, 2021, with the KIA welcoming 82,022 travellers.

The release states that the number of domestic destinations served directly from Bengaluru Airport has grown to 76 compared to 54 last year. The top domestic routes were Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Goa.

In the same period, the airport served 20 international destinations with Dubai, Male, Doha, London, and Frankfurt being the top cities contributing 67% to the traffic. In 2019, the airport handled 2.35 lakh ATMs that include 30,556 International flights and 2.04 lakh domestic flights.

"Growth in the international segment is expected to increase as more airlines reinstate operations to and from KIA during the coming months. Scheduled international operations commenced effective from March 21, 2022, and as a result, airlines have started reinstating their pre-Covid international network from the Bengaluru Airport. By the second quarter of the current financial year, airlines are expected to serve most of their international pre-COVID non-stop destinations, " stated the release.

The BIAL said that the highest tonnage cargo handled in the last financial year was 4.11 lakh metric tonne. The airport processed 2.71 lakh MT of International cargo, recording a growth of 31% and 1.39 lakh domestic cargo, recording a growth of 17% compared to the year 2020-21.

HC stays investigation into rape case against minor boy

It will examine if it can be closed based on mutual settlement

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

FROM THE COURT

The High Court of Karnataka has stayed the investigation into a rape case registered against a 16-year-old boy till the court examines whether the criminal case could be closed based on the mutual settlement reached between the families of the accused boy and the victim girl, who is also a minor.

The court noted that both the boy and the girl, and their parents, have entered into a settlement and want to close the criminal case registered by the Bengaluru city police against the boy under the provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2006. "It was also pointed out to the court by the counsel of petitioner-boy, represented through his father, that there is constant harassment during the investigation.

It was also contended on behalf of the petitioner-boy that there are plethora of cases rendered by the constitutional courts accepting settlement and termination of criminal proceedings.

Stayed till May 23

Pointing out that contentions require consideration, Justice M. Nagaprasanna stayed the investigation till May 23 while adjourning further hearing till May 24.

The case was registered after the girl's father lodged a complaint with the police in November last year that his minor daughter did not return home from the college. The police, who tracked the girl based on her mobile phone location, found her with the boy and later registered rape case against him after recording statement of the girl and her parents.

It was pointed out to the High Court that both the boy and girl were in a relationship, and whatever happened was a result of their relationship and differences. The High Court was also informed that parents of both the adolescents, based on several rounds of counselling, had mutually decided to put an end to the case keeping in mind the future of the youngsters.

'Cannot be settled'

Meanwhile, the prosecution told the court that cases registered for offences under POCSO Act cannot be settled through mutual agreement.

However, the counsel for petitioner-boy cited a decision of Madras High Court, which in January 2021 had quashed a criminal proceedings in case registered under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2006. by allowing settlement between families of two minors.

"Punishing an adolescent boy who enters into a relationship with a minor girl by treating him as an offender, was never the objective of the POCSO Act...," the Madras High Court had observed in its verdict.

'Bring sugarcane cultivation under digital infrastructure'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU

Sugarcane farmers have urged the State Government to bring sugarcane cultivation and sugar factories' operations under a digital infrastructure.

Addressing a press conference here on Tuesday, President of Karnataka Sugarcane Growers Association Kurubur Shanthakumar cited the use of E Ganna app by the farmers and sugar factories in Uttar Pradesh that has helped farmers receive dues within 14 days of supplying sugarcane to factories.

App in U.P.

After downloading the app on their mobiles and registering themselves, the farmers need to upload details such as the extent of area under sugarcane cultivation and date of sowing on the app. After all the farmers upload the details, the calendar for harvesting and transporting sugarcane to the factories is shared with them through the app.

The harvesting date is fixed as per seniority and the farmers are given three to four days' time for cutting and transporting the sugarcane to the factories.

After the produce reaches the factory, the same is weighed and a message is sent to the farmer. The same message also goes to the Government, which releases payment to the farmers within 14 days, Mr. Shanthakumar said. The Government recovers the payment made to the farmers as about 80 per cent of the proceeds of the sugar, ethanol and molasses sold by the sugar factories goes to the Government, Mr. Shanthakumar said.

Delayed payment

In Karnataka, the sugar factories delay the payment to farmers by three months to five months.

Also, FRP fixed by the Government in Karnataka was only ₹2,900 per tonne against the ₹3,500 per tonne fixed by the Government in Uttar Pradesh, he claimed.

The establishment of digital infrastructure for sugarcane industry will also ensure higher recovery rate and more transparency. If there is no delay in the crushing process after harvesting, the recovery rate of sugar is also high, he reasoned.

DCRE issues second notice to Kempaiah

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

After failing to respond to the first notice issued by the Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement (DCRE) in connection with the fake caste certificate case, officials issued a second notice to IPS officer M. Kempaiah (retd) on Tuesday.

Sources said Mr. Kempaiah had received the first notice and assured the officer that he would come. As he failed to appear, the officials pasted the second notice notice outside his house.

Director-General of DCRE Ravindranath said the notice is to give Mr. Kempaiah an opportunity to clarify the allegation against him. If he fails to turn up, officials will take a decision without his version, he said.

Refusing to elaborate further, Mr. Ravindranath said a file pertaining to the case, which was missing from DCRE., had been recovered.

As per allegations, Mr. Kempaiah submitted a false caste certificate and got selected to IPS claiming that he is kadu Kuruba (backward caste), while he belongs to Kuruba (ST) community. Mr. Kempaiah took VRS in 2009 and became the Home Minister's adviser in the Siddaramaiah Government.

Since the case has once again came up for enquiry, Mr. Kempaiah is under the radar and if proven guilty, the Government may recover the salary and pension benefits he had claimed, besides filing an FIR, sources said.

MLA's daughter's case

Reacting to Honnali constituency MLA Renukacharya's daughter's case, Mr. Ravindranath said the DCRE has initiated probe.

The daughter of Mr. Renukacharya, who is from the Lingayat community, had obtained a certificate identifying herself as belonging to Scheduled Caste.

Briefing about the work done by DCRE so far, Mr. Ravindranath said the department has so far registered FIR against 111 tahsildars, 108 revenue inspectors, and 107 village accountants found guilty of issuing fake caste certificates.

Tree fall continues to pose threat to residents

Citizens come down heavily on BBMP for not putting in place a systematic tree pruning mechanism

TANIA ANNY
BENGALURU

The recent spate of rain in April has led to more than 50 tree falls, including a coconut tree, in the city. With the recent case of a 10-year-old girl passing away due to injuries suffered in a tree branch fall, the spectre of tree falls and the threat it poses to life or limbs has become real again.

Residents across the city have come down heavily on the civic body for not putting in place a systematic tree pruning mechanism.

Satyamurthy, founder president of Residential Welfare Association (RWA) Sanjaynagar, says: "The main problem is that nobody cares. Even if we do complain to the BBMP, they don't take immediate action. They provide helpline numbers but we don't get any help from them. Most of the time we try to solve it by ourselves," he said.

Meenakshi, a resident of CK Achukattu, said the civic body's apathy towards trees near her house has been so bad that despite being a tree lover, she is made to feel like getting them cut. "BBMP needs to maintain trees, prune them regularly to ensure the branches do not block electric lines and cut down dead branches. Every time it rains, we live in fear of a fall. Nobody from the BBMP's forest cell responds to our calls and attends to our complaints," she said.

Over 50 tree falls, including a coconut tree, were reported in the city after the recent spate of rainfall. • FILE PHOTO

After two years of being in coma, 10-year-old Rachel Prisha who sustained severe injuries after a dry tree branch fell on her head, passed away in February. Her father Raju now wants to become a volunteer to follow up on maintenance of trees and check for dry branches to be removed in the city. Still in trauma over losing his only daughter, Mr. Raju says: "Whatever happened to me should not happen to anyone. The authorities should take responsibility to take care of the trees".

Tree activist Vijay Nishanth said the problem was that the city wakes up to maintenance of trees only during the monsoon and following a mishap.

"After a period of time, every tree needs to be followed up regularly. Pruning old branches or extra branches is also healthy for trees," he said. He also added that it was high time the city started using the latest technology like sensors to check on a tree's health, to provide better monitoring. He argued that not only the civic body, even people must participate and come forward to monitor trees in their own localities, joining hands with the civic body.

Govindaraj, Deputy Conservator of Forests, BBMP, said the civic body does carry out regular checks across the city for trees that need pruning or weak wooded for removal. "In other seasons we usually get 2-3 complain daily about dead branches or weak wooded trees but it increases to 20-30 in monsoon. In the rainy season we expand major equipment and number of workers as well," he said.

Techie rears sheep out of passion

Despite challenges, 'Hasu Mane' is a successful venture

CHITRA. V.RAMANI
BENGALURU

Every day, 30-year-old Yogesh Gowda wakes up around 5.30 a.m, but not to squeeze in a workout. Instead, he feeds the 40-odd sheep that he is rearing in a portion of his house in Bengaluru.

A software engineer working in an IT firm in Bengaluru, Mr. Gowda started 'Hasu Mane' in his house at Gowdanapalya, near Uttarahalli, around seven years ago. Starting with eight cows, he used to supply around 100 litres of milk to the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) every day.

Yogesh Gowda, a techie, rears sheep in a portion of his house in Gowdanapalya, in Bengaluru.

Three years ago

"I started rearing sheep around three years ago. During the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, my mother got infected. That's when I sold the cows, as people kept coming to me for milk. I started concentrating on sheep rearing," he said. Though it's unconventional to rear sheep in a city, he says it is his passion. Despite the challenges, he has turned it into a successful venture after a lot of research. He sells his sheep directly, which is one of the main reasons for them fetching a good price.

As the sheep are reared in a house using the stall-feeding system, Mr. Gowda has placed wooden pellets on the floor to ensure cleanliness.

The sheep manure is cleaned every day and sent to his uncle's farm where it is used as fertiliser.

"This has helped me keep the house clean. Since the past seven years, I have not given my neighbours any room for complaint," he added.

While the usual livestock feed of *hindi*, *boosa* and maize are given, he has replaced fodder with sugarcane waste and raw banana peels. "I learnt that in South Africa, livestock are fed with sugarcane waste. I approached a nearby juice centre from where I get sugarcane waste every day. I get raw banana peels from a chip factory nearby. What is waste for them is fodder for my sheep," he said.

Mr. Gowda rears three native breeds - Mouli (popular in many parts of north Karnataka and Maharashtra), the very popular Kenguri and Natimari. He breeds one batch every nine months, and takes a break for a month.

"I visit animal fairs in Akkirampura near Koratagere in Tumakuru district and Amingad in Bagalkot district to buy sheep kids for rearing."

Mr. Gowda credits his success to his wife Amitha, also a software engineer, and his parents.

"My dream is to have a farm. I have bought a small parcel of land at Sugganahalli in Ramanagaram. My dream farm should be ready in a year," he said.

CID probe sought into 'scam' in MUDA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MYSURU

Several farmers representing the Federation of Karnataka State Farmers' Associations and State Sugarcane Growers' Federation staged a protest outside the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) premises in the city on Tuesday seeking a probe by Criminal Investigation Department (CID) into the recently unearthed scam in MUDA. During a recent drive to digitise MUDA records, the officials found that several pages containing entries of sites allotted to beneficiaries in residential layouts of the city were missing. The activists representing farmers' organisations marched to the MUDA office and shouted slogans against UDA officials for the scam.

A team of policemen deployed at the entrance of MUDA prevented the protesters from entering the premises. President of the Federation Kurubur Shanthakumar told *The Hindu* that the farmers refused to hand over the memorandum to senior MUDA officials. "We did not wish to do so as the scam has taken place in their establishment. We wanted to hand over the memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner," he said. Additional Deputy Commissioner Manjunatha Swamy received the memorandum.

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Are you leaving some 'uncut grass' in your cubicle?

Wells Fargo onboards first cohort of neurodivergent employees in India

PRINCE FREDERICK

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

In the two-volume *Prayer of the Frog*, Anthony De Mello (1931-87) presented a collectanea of stories gleaned from occidental, oriental and other recognised traditions under the sun. Pithy, sharp-witted and often gently marinated in humour, these stories dissected the human condition with finesse, and seemed capable of being applied to a variety of situations.

One story seems to have foreshadowed an amorphous chunk of corporate wisdom, which is only now emerging into something of a crystallised form. It is a story about inclusion, which can be extended to the corporate world.

This story is about a father bribing her daughter to pare the lawn down to uniformity and order, mowing down the unwanted grass. Excited by the prospect of having some pocket money, the girl mows the expansive lawn in a frenzy, but curiously enough, leaves one patch of grass undisturbed. No amount of goading would cause her to run those now almost-obsolete curved blades on that patch. Standing her ground, she even chooses to not take the proffered money. It comes to light that a toad had make that patch its home. Anthony De Mello concludes the story thus: "Where there is love, there is disorder. Perfect order would make the world a graveyard."

Inclusion and diversity in the corporate world never follow an easy, straightforward course: It requires intent, effort, and bending of attitudes. In recent times, there have been exemplary efforts from the corporate world to leave cubicles with some "uncut grass". Among the more recent examples is a programme by Wells Fargo to hire neurodivergent candidates in India, which reached its logical conclusion only four weeks ago. Then, NASCOMM in partnership with NASCOMM Foundation is organising a summit (April 27-28) which seeks to remove Inclusion from the marginalia of human-resource discussions and take it to the headlines of boardroom deliberations and business strategy.

The Wells Fargo story

Wells Fargo's neurodiversity programme – which began in the United States in 2020 – has been extended to a new clime, with 12 neurodivergent individuals becoming part of its India operations. Out of this cohort, 10 have been placed in technology roles. The two others are in banking operations.

It is remarkable that the onboarding happened towards the end of March, and the Wells Fargo team had chosen the timing carefully, pushing it close to a month that symbolises inclusion. April is Autism Awareness Month. However, as a communication from the company observes, the organisation focusses on a broader spectrum of neurodiversity – one that spans across Autism, ADHD, Bipolar disorder, Dyslexia and other forms of neurodiversity.

Alex Ouseph, senior vice president, Wells Fargo India & Philippines, leads multiple technology-operations teams, and with a spirit of volunteering leads the neurodiversity programme in India. Some onboaded neurodivergent individuals that don technology roles are part of Alex's team.

During an interaction with *The Hindu Opportunities*, Alex dwells on the three steps of the programme. This hiring programme began way before it started being spoken about in the public domain. It got out of the blocks in March 2021.

"We mapped out the different steps of the programme," says Alex, and emphasising that each step had to be treated on a par with every other step.

Wells Fargo had adopted a Train-Intern-Hire model. As the model was being implemented, the team would have to work with a range of associates, not all of them on the company's rolls.

The community partner, EnAble India, would identify the candidates for the programme.

Alex notes that they worked with the community partner to ensure a combination a soft-skills and domain-skills training.

"From the domain-skills angle, we took the lead," he adds.

The skills training exercise, which covered 14 weeks, was preceded by intensive job analysis. Alex explains that open roles with the companies were identified for these candidates.

The 14-week training was "in preparation for the internship, which is about an intense on-the-job training for three months," says Alex.

The sensitisation part

Even as the neurodivergent candidates were being prepared for their roles, the teams were being prepared to receive them.

"Even as we started the programme, we simultaneously created considerable awareness internally. We took a top-down approach wherein we started a sensitisation exercise for all senior managers. As we looked at which teams these candidates would be a part of, we organised a specific sensitisation programme for all of the immediate employees who would work with the neurodivergent employees," says Alex.

Beyond the cubicle

Alex explains how a neurodiversity hiring programme has to cover much ground, one that lies outside the cubicle, in fact, far from the office. "Many of the candidates on the spectrum depend hugely on their families; and we ensured that the parents stayed connected to the programme. Even before the candidates came on board, even as the training period was under way, we connected with their parents. The parents were keen on learning about the environment that their children would be a part of."

In a work-from-home situation, parents often have to be job 'coaches', a role usually played by co-workers, mentors and managers

A communication from Wells Fargo elaborates on this aspect of the programme.

"It helps prepare the family and caregivers for the individual's employment journey. In a work-from-home situation, parents often have to be job 'coaches', a role usually played by co-workers, mentors and managers, so involving both work family and family is a win-win."

Another such cohort is reportedly on the cards.

NASSCOM's virtual summit on Inclusion today

"Looking Ahead – Mainstreaming Inclusion" – the theme of 14th edition of NASSCOM's Global Inclusion Summit, being conducted virtually on April 27-28 – promises a whole new world, where Inclusion would be removed from the marginalia of HR and hiring discussions, and elevated to "critical business agenda" and "boardroom conversation".

A note about the Summit, organised by NASSCOM in partnership with NASSCOM Foundation, mentions that the edition would augur in efforts to "create a culture of inclusion across all levels of the tech industry".

The script of the event includes discussions on one, "the role of leadership in creating a culture of inclusion at workplaces"; two, "how new technologies can help enable inclusion"; and three, "trends that can help drive inclusion in the future". Notable topics on the slate include: "Building Values That Drive an Inclusive Culture: A Boardroom Perspective"; "Assistive Technology: Unlocking the Power of Technology-Driven Inclusion" and "Inking the Inclusion Manifesto for Gen Z". The event – where the Minister of Women & Child Development in the Union Cabinet, Smriti Zubin Irani will deliver the opening keynote – has panellists from a wide spectrum of professional excellence: Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog; Anant Maheshwari, President, Microsoft; Tiger Tyagarajan, CEO, Genpact; Dia Mirza, Actor, Producer, United Nations Secretary-General Advocate for Sustainable Development Goals.

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Sd/-
REGISTRAR

The other side of hybrid work: Deloitte study on what it means for women

FILE PHOTO

Hybrid model is widely perceived as the future of work, particularly because it gives employees the best of both worlds: Working out of home and office.

However, a new survey notes that it may not be all that it is cracked up to be, particularly for women.

Women professionals face widespread burnout and do not get to enjoy the fruits of flexible work.

"Women @ Work 2022: A Global Outlook" by Deloitte research shows that 56% of women experienced stress levels higher than they had a year ago, and almost half feel burned-out.

More than 40% of women actively looking for a new employer cited burnout as a top reason for not wanting to continue with their current organisation.

More than half of those surveyed want to leave their employer in the next two years, and only 9% plan to stay with their current employer for more than five years, says the report.

The study, conducted between November 2021 and February 2022, surveyed 5,000 women in 10 countries, including 500 in India, and sectors to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's personal and professional lives.

The "new normal" of work has been a challenge as almost 61% of the women working in the hybrid model report that they have felt excluded.

While many organisations over the past year have pivoted workplace strategies to incorporate flexible and hybrid work models, many women said they are yet to feel the benefits of these new ways of working.

Only 33% of women say their employers offer flexible-working policies and only 23% cite flexibility around where and when they work.

More than 90% of respondents feel that requesting flexible working will affect their likelihood of promotion. More than 60% of women who work in hybrid environments feel they have been excluded from important meetings, and 47% say they do not have enough exposure to leaders.

This year's survey also found that women who work in a hybrid environment are significantly more likely to report experiencing micro-aggressions than those who work exclusively on-site or exclusively remote.

In India, the percentage of women that have experienced non-inclusive behaviours (harassment + micro-aggressions) over the past year at work has decreased from 63% in 2021 but still remains high at 57% in 2022. The top three micro-aggressions faced by women in India included being interrupted and/or talked over in meetings, not being invited to traditionally male-dominated activities, and being excluded from informal interactions or conversations.

Only 24% of non-inclusive behaviours were reported to employers. Intersectionality matters as women from diverse backgrounds face heightened challenges globally.

Many feel less optimistic about their career prospects compared with 12 months ago. Levels of burnout vary across professional levels as well.

Women who work for leaders that promote gender-equality report far higher levels of well-being and job satisfaction.

Of the women who work for them, 87% say they receive adequate mental health support from their employer, and the same percentage feel comfortable talking about their mental health in the workplace. They also report far more positive experiences with hybrid working.

Remarkably, in this group, only 3% feel burned out.

Tech and STEM job postings top the table

'Software engineer' and 'application developer' are the top job roles

Tech and STEM job postings in India have seen a steady increase since 2015, says a report from Indeed. Jobs in these two sectors have significantly increased since the onset of the pandemic in 2020 with tech and STEM growing over 38% and 37% respectively, said a release.

Among the cities, Bengaluru has the highest number of job postings (32.5%) and job seeker interest (16%) across both tech and STEM fields. This is followed by Pune with 11% in job postings across tech and STEM. Hyderabad, Chennai and Mumbai round off the top five cities for tech and STEM jobs. The top job role across both tech and STEM fields is software engineer, with the share of jobs in tech at 8.6 % and in STEM at 8.4%. This is followed by application developer at 6.8% in tech and 6.7% in STEM and full stack developer (4%).

Indeed's data also indicates that the "job clicks" for tech and STEM roles have decreased in the last one year. From February 2021 to February 2022, clicks on tech and STEM jobs have decreased by 15% and 13% respectively. This indicates that while demand for these roles continues to soar, there exists a gap in terms of the supply for these jobs.

The new office space of Colliers and (below) Myntra PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Tech companies lead office space absorption

Bengaluru, Chennai and Delhi-NCR currently dominate office space absorption, accounting for almost two-thirds of the transaction activity, says a report by real estate consulting firm CBRE South Asia. The report observed that the office sector in India continued to witness a robust recovery in the first of 2022, as leasing activity grew by 97% Y-o-Y to touch 11.4 million sq. ft.

Technology corporates drove leasing with a share of about 34%, followed by BFSI firms (17%), flexible space operators (13%), engineering and manufacturing (12%) and research, consulting and analytics (11%) firms.

According to the report, office space take-up was driven by small (less than 10,000 sq.ft) to medium-sized (10,000-50,000 sq. ft.) transactions with a share of around 84%. Pune and Chennai, followed by Delhi-NCR and Bengaluru, dominated large-sized deal closures.

Supply witnessed in Q1 2022 was around 9.4 million sq. ft – a slight dip of around 11% Y-o-Y and 41% Q-o-Q, said the release. Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai dominated development completions, accounting for a cumulative share of about 70%. Supply was driven by non-SEZ developments with a share of around 83%.

Key trends

The report pointed that "renewals, renegotiations, and addition of flexibility" options are likely to be the focus of occupiers in the short term.

It also states that real estate firms are seeing evidence emerging in corporates intending to shift towards hybrid working policies, with several occupiers planning to implement policies allowing office-based working with the option of working remotely.

With health and wellness, flexibility, gaining even more prominence post-COVID, occupiers are expected to demand more sophisticated and tech-enhanced real estate offerings, said the report. Environmental and sustainability issues, such as carbon emissions, the use of sustainable materials, energy efficiency and wellness enhancements are likely to become ever more important to occupiers and owners of office buildings, the release added.

'We have moved to a new office'

* Myntra has moved into a new state-of-the-art space in Bengaluru. Spread across an area of over 3,00,000 sq. ft, the space offers a balance between work, creativity and play. It allows employees the flexibility of working from the office as well as enable in-person collaboration as Myntra enters a hybrid model of work, says a press release.

Vertical gardens, use of upcycled material for art installations and furniture upholstery and integration of rainwater harvesting are some of the environment-friendly steps being taken. Tastefully-done break rooms, book corners, jam rooms, cycling workstations, outdoor gaming areas, which include volleyball and basketball courts, add to the wellness quotient, the release adds.

*Colliers too recently commenced its operations from its new address in Mumbai, One BKC. A release called the office the new activity-based workspace promoting agile work practices, wellness, and an engaging environment. The design of the workplace has been developed around the requirements of its people and clients, with wellness spaces, an amphitheater, a media room, a cafeteria and a work café at the reception to encourage interactions amongst teams and clients.

GENERAL

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End Date: 24th May 2022
Advertisement No. CWC/1-Manpower/DR/Superintending Engineer/Rectt/2022/01

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3	Civil Engineering (CE)	03	7	Computer Science and Information Technology (CS)	06
4	Electrical Engineering (EE)	06	8	Chemistry (CY)	02

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Special court orders ACB probe against former, serving IAS officers

Inquiry report to be submitted to court within four months on misappropriation of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department's funds during 2009-2015

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A special court has directed the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to conduct an inquiry against three former Principal Secretaries of the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department and three others to ascertain the allegations that they had caused a loss of ₹269 crore to the exchequer by misappropriating public funds during 2009-15.

The inquiry has been ordered against former Principal Secretaries, retired IAS officers Amita Prasad and T.M. Vijaya Bhaskar (also a former Chief Secretary), serving IAS officer E.V. Ramana Reddy, a retired IAS officer and the then Additional Secretary of RDPR Department Bore Gowda, the then Deputy Secretary Ramakrishna, and Ceelam Giri, the then Assistant General Manager (AGM) of Syndicate Bank (now Canara Bank).

The 23 Additional City Civil and Sessions Court (special court for cases under Prevention of Corruption Act), Bengaluru, passed the order on a private complaint filed by 55-year-old S. Narayanaswamy, a social worker from Kolar district.

No action

He had filed the complaint before the court as the ACB did not act on his complaint filed in 2019 against the officers for their alleged misconduct and abuse of power when they were holding respective posts in the RDPR Department.

Lakshminaraya Bhat K., the judge of the special court in his April 18 order, has directed that an officer not below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of ACB Bengaluru Urban district should conduct the inquiry/investigation and submit the report to the court within four months.

Pointing out that it is not possible for the court to arrive at any conclusion to proceed either under Section 203 or under Section 204 of the Cr.PC in the absence of an investigation/inquiry by the police officer, the court said that in order to ascertain the involvement of the accused in the alleged offence a direction for an inquiry/investigation under Section 202(1) of the Cr.PC is necessary.

The complainant has made specific allegations against the accused officers that from 2010-10 to 2014-15, they had committed the offence of misappropriation of the public fund to the extent of ₹3,405.21 crore and this aspect had come to light in an audit report.

It was also alleged that the accused officers, contrary to the Memorandum of Understanding, had opened six bank accounts, the then AGM had in all opened 98 accounts contrary to the rules, and the accused officers of the RDPR Department had failed to deposit the excess amount in fixed deposits and thereby caused a loss of ₹269 crore to the exchequer.

Different accounts

Both in the audit report and the deposition before the court, an officer of the Karnataka State Audit and Accounts Department had stated that he had noticed that ₹10,179.80 crore has been transferred and re-transferred from different bank accounts and the accused officers had failed to forward any explanation regarding the transfer of funds from one bank account to another.

The police under Section 202(1) are having limited power for investigation without registration of the case and arrest of the accused. The police under Section 202 (1) of the Cr.PC are required to file report of inquiry whether there is a prima facie case made out against the accused, the court noted in its order.

BJP planning door-to-door campaign to create awareness about its schemes

Proposed campaign will be systematic and target-oriented: Ravikumar

B.S. SATISH KUMAR
BENGALURU

The Bharatiya Janata Party is set to launch a massive door-to-door campaign to publicise various development schemes taken up by the Centre and the State government, as part of the party's preparation for the 2023 Assembly elections, in about a month.

Party State general secretary and MLC Ravikumar said the proposed campaign would be systematic and target-oriented. "We are going to get data on beneficiaries of various schemes. Depending upon such data, our proposed campaign would focus on the schemes that have large number of beneficiaries in any particular area," he said.

Citing an example, he said Sira taluk had high number of farmer beneficiaries under Kisan Samman scheme. The campaign there would focus on that scheme among others.

Already, the party is preparing list of various Central and State schemes that have a large number of beneficiaries including social security pension schemes, piped water supply under Jal jeevan mission, scholarship programme for farmers' children and various schemes for women.

The party has just completed the process of forming committees at all the booths. Pointing out that more than 60,000 booth-level committees had been formed, Mr. Ravikumar said they would play a key role in outreach programme as they would be given the responsibility of visiting the doorsteps of people. They would also help us in identifying the beneficiaries under various schemes, he said. To establish the identity of the party at grassroots level, the heads of all the 60,000-plus booth level committees had been told to put up a board in front of their residences, he said.

Meanwhile, sources in the BJP Government said Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai had ensured that the process of implementing the budgetary schemes had commenced by issuing Government Orders for 150 of the total 180 schemes listed in the State budget.

The Chief Minister is also said to be keen that the Ministers themselves lead from the front in ensuring that the Government schemes reach beneficiaries. In this regard, he is learnt to have suggested to the Ministers to tour different districts. This is expected to be launched sometime in May.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai patting a bull at the launch of the Budihal-Peerapur Lift Irrigation Scheme in Vijayapura on Tuesday. Sources say Mr. Bommai has ensured that the process of implementing budgetary schemes has commenced. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Cabinet expansion

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Tuesday said efforts would be made to ensure a regional balance in the ministry when expansion exercise is taken up. "We will try to give representation to all regions as far as possible when we take up Cabinet expansion," Mr. Bommai told reporters.

Congress identifying local issues segment-wise to fine-tune poll strategy

KPCC calls for meeting of newly appointed vice-presidents and general secretaries

NAGESH PRABHU
BENGALURU

After filling several vacancies in the party organisation, Congress has now commenced an exercise to identify local issues in each Legislative Assembly constituency to strategise the party's campaign in the coming days and maximise the party's victory in the 2023 Assembly elections.

Surjewala in State

Randeep Singh Surjewala, AICC General Secretary incharge of Karnataka, who has decided to spend maximum number of days in the State till the next elections, has already held a series of meetings with leaders and office-bearers of the party of Davangere, Chitradurga, Bengaluru Central, South and North constituencies to map out issues.

The Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) has called a meeting of newly appointed 40 party vice-presidents and 109 general secretaries on Wednesday and Thursday to explain their role and responsibilities and fine-tune the party's poll strategy.

Randeep Singh Surjewala

- Candidates to be selected based on local issues such as caste, sub-caste, development work, strength of the Opposition parties (BJP and JD-S), incumbent legislator's rapport with the electorate and gram panchayat members, role of new entrants to the party, and vote bank of minorities.

KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Siddaramaiah and his counterpart in the Council B.K. Hariprasad would attend the meeting for two days. Mr. Surjewala is expected to attend the meeting on Thursday.

Sources in the party told *The Hindu* that Mr. Surjewala and Mr. Shivakumar have decided to select candidates based on local issues such as caste, sub-caste, development work, strength of the Opposition parties (BJP and JD-S), incumbent legislator's rapport with the electorate and gram panchayat members, role of new entrants to the party, and vote bank of minorities. While the party would consider the past electoral record or support in the constituency, the present record of the candidate in terms enrolment of new member to the party, participation in the protests against the BJP Government's policies, presence in social media, and rapport with the local media too would be given weightage while selecting the candidates. The party has been identifying challenges in each constituency to counter the Opposition, sources said.

Unlike in the past, the party has decided not to field candidates "dropped from the top" at the instructions of the Central leaders of the party or high command, sources said.

To ensure adequate preparation of each candidate for facing the elections, the party has decided to select candidates six months in advance. Apparently, many senior leaders have suggested to the high command that campaign strategy would be fine-tuned in advance by early selection of candidates backed up with sufficient financial resources.

The party has roped in a poll strategy team to plan the campaign. According to sources, the party would launch the first phase of its campaign, largely focusing on social media in June and the second phase with outdoor campaign in October.

Now, fake appointment racket in Social Welfare Dept.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Worried over the incidents of fake appointments in the department, Dayanand K.S., Commissioner, Social Welfare Department has filed a complaint with the Vidhana Soudha police seeking a detailed probe.

In his complaint, he said that people are creating fake appointment letters and issuing it with signature and seal of the authorities concerned. This is to tarnish the image of the department and cheat members of the general public, which needs to be investigated to ascertain those behind the racket, he said.

FIR registered

The police have registered an FIR against unknown people on Sunday charging them under forgery for the purpose of cheating.

D.K. Shivakumar dares State Govt. to issue notice to him

Several people take photographs with me, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

As the photograph of him with Divya Hagaragi, the main accused in the Police Sub-Inspector scam, went viral on social media, Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee president D.K. Shivakumar on Tuesday dared the State Government to issue a notice to him.

Earlier, a photograph of the accused with Home Minister Araga Jnanendra had also gone viral.

Speaking to reporters at the party office, Mr. Shivakumar said, "Let them issue notice. Several people come and take photographs with me."

On Sunday, the CID had issued a notice asking MLA Priyank Kharge to appear on Monday with evidence to aid the ongoing investigation into the recruitment scam. However, Mr. Kharge did not appear before the CID, amid a political slugfest over the investigating agency asking the former Minister to submit evidence on the police sub-inspectors recruitment scam.

D.K. Shivakumar

Kharge slammed

Mr. Jnanendra, in a statement, slammed Mr. Kharge for not appearing before the CID. Meanwhile, Mr. Kharge responded to it by stating that the BJP was targeting him for raising a public issue.

Former Home Minister and MLA Ramalinga Reddy told reporters that Mr. Shivakumar was not part of the State Government. Mr. Jnanendra, on the other hand, had visited the residence of Hagaragi, and why no notice had been issued to him for having met the accused, he asked.

He alleged that the Government has been attempting to hush up the scam by giving protection to all those BJP workers/leaders involved in the scam. Why has the police not arrested the main accused till now, the Congress leader asked. The accused has been absconding, while her husband is in custody.

One more held in PSI scam case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The CID, probing the PSI recruitment scam, arrested Sunil Kumar after document verification by the officials found that he was one of the beneficiaries.

Sunil Kumar from Kalaburagi had attended his exam in Jnana Jyothi centre, which is the now under the CID radar for carrying out irregularities and helping all the candidates to secure highest ranks in the list.

Sunil Kumar, according to the officials, was summoned along with others to submit documents for verification. Even before one of the accused arrested in this case confessed that Sunil Kumar was his candidate, the candidate's OMR sheet verification proved his involvement, officials said. The CID officials camped in Kalaburagi have arrested 17 persons. However, the kingpins are still on the run.

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation
Kempegowda Bus Station Division, Bengaluru

No: KST/KBS/COM/80/2022-23 DATE: 22/04/2022

E- TENDER/NEGOTIATION NOTIFICATION NO: 01/2022-23

Applications are invited from interested parties through E-procurement Portal for selecting licensees for vacant/to be vacant general stalls no 25, 121 (Terminal-1), 113 (Terminal-02), Kempegowda Bus Station and Stall no. 14 at Mysuru Road Bus Station, Bengaluru and also application are invited through negotiation for Stall no 44, 46, 48, 57 ATM Counter (Terminal-01), 115 (Terminal-02) Two wheeler parking, (Terminal-03), at Kempegowda Bus station and Stall no 10, 22, 04, 05, 06, 15, 30, 31, open space-02, Office space & ATM Counter, at Mysuru Road Bus Station. For more information please visit https:/www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in and www.ksrtc.in Contact: KSRTC:7760990557/7760960554/ HP help desk: +91-0846010000/+91-8068948777.

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K B S Division, Bengaluru

DPR/CP/287/AKAR/22-23

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Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Social Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **MR. K J IRFAN** has negotiated to purchase the below mentioned Schedule Property from **MR. J NATARAJAN**, son of Late N. Jayaraman, who is the owner of the Schedule Property. This is to give notice to the public that any person who claims of any right, title, interest of any nature in relation to the Schedule Property and/or has any claim and/or any objections to proposed purchase, should submit their representations/objections in writing along with supporting documents to the undersigned advocate within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which it will be presumed that no valid claims or objections subsist and my client would be at liberty to proceed to complete the purchase transaction in their favour.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Site No. 72, formed in the Private Layout of the Narayanappa Block House Building Co-Operative Society Limited formed in Survey Number 29/1 of Mataduhalli, Bangalore North, Bangalore measuring as under: East to West by: 30 Feet or 9.14 metres North to South by: 40 Feet or 12.19 metres In all measuring 1200 sq. ft. Or 111.41 sq. metres and bounded as follows, East by: Site No. 71, West by: Site No. 73, North by: Site No. 63, South by: Road.

A.N. Basheer Ahmed, Advocate
No. 70, 10th Cross, 3rd Main, C.B.I. Road,
Gangasagar, Bangalore 560 024.
Mobile: +91 9880423230 / 8618980187

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that our client Mr. Syed Zakir Hussian intends to enter into a transaction in respect of the immovable property more particularly described in the Schedule hereunder and referred to as the "Schedule Property" with its present owner Mr.Mukarram Rahim Khan, Aged about 53 years, Son of Mr.Rahim Khan, Residing at No.933, 21st Cross, 1st Stage, 2nd Block, Near Narendra Tent, HBR Layout, Bangalore-560043. (Hereinafter referred to as the "Owner"), who has represented to our client that he is the sole and absolute owner of the Schedule Property having unrestricted rights of alienation over the same. The Owner has further represented to our client that the Schedule Property is free from all encumbrances, charges, lien, litigations and / or any third party rights/claims of any nature whatsoever. Notice is hereby given to the general public that, if any person/s, entity, company, firm, institution (corporate or otherwise) has or claims any right, title, interest, pending, litigation, tenancy, mortgage, charge, lien or demand or any other interest of whatsoever nature in or upon the Schedule Property or any part thereof, the same may be brought to the notice of the undersigned in writing together with all details and documents in support of such claim within 11 (eleven) days from the date of this Notice, failing which, it shall be deemed that the aforesaid Owner has a clear and marketable title to the Schedule Property. Any objections and/or claims received after the expiry of the period mentioned above shall neither be entertained nor be binding on our client.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the land together with the structures standing thereon bearing Site No.1145, Assessment No71,Katha No. 1047/1/1187, situated at Nagavara Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Now coming within the jurisdictional folds of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahangara Palike, bearing Corporation No.1144/71/114871/04, Corporation Ward No.24, Bangalore, measuring on the East : 60 feet, West : 60 feet, North: 40 feet, and South: 40 feet, totally measuring 2400 Square Feet, the same is being bounded on the:

East by : Site bearing No.1144; **West by :** Road; **North by :** Road; **South by :** Site bearing No.1112

Sujatha.V
Associate Advocate
#3, 1st Floor, H.K.P Road, C.C Colony,
Shivajinagar, Bangalore-51,
Mob 9591993797, 9886688777

State may ink 9 EOIs in renewable energy sector

This is expected to fetch investments worth ₹61,000 cr.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The renewable energy sector of Karnataka is likely to get a boost as the State-held Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Limited (KREDL) is expected to sign nine Expressions of Interest (EOI) with as many investors.

These EOIs, which are expected to fetch investments worth ₹61,000 crore, are to be signed at the three-day Windergy-2022 conference being organised by the Indian Wind Turbine Manufacturers' Association (IWTMA) and PDA Trade fairs Pvt Ltd in New Delhi.

These investments are expected to result in an increase in renewable energy installed capacity in Karnataka by 9.2 GW. • FILE PHOTO

These investments are expected to result in an increase in renewable energy installed capacity in Karnataka by 9.2 GW. According to an official release, they are also expected to generate more than 12,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities. Investors who are expected to sign EOIs include Tata Power, Renew Power and Torrent Power.

Clean energy

The conference, which is the fourth edition of the wind energy event, will deliberate on methods to facilitate India's transition to clean energy.

Various sessions are being held to discuss the potential, possibility, development of technology and hurdles in the Wind Energy sector, states the release.

The event will mainly focus on fulfilling the national commitment of quick migration to clean energy of which wind energy is one of the pivotal pillars.

The conference will have delegates representing renewable energy stakeholders including investors, equipment manufacturers, Independent Power Producers, component manufacturers, and representatives of Spanish, Belgium, Danish and British Governments.

KREDL is hoping that the new taluk wise Wind Power Potential report brought out in Karnataka will further entice investors to invest in the State, according to Additional Chief Secretary, Energy Department, S.G. Kumar Naik.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

13th ANNIVERSARY
In loving memory of

Mrs. KANAKA THOMAS
Fondly remembered by
T.Joseph (Son)
Dr.Hemalatha (Daughter-in-law)
Rohit, Devina, Harvey & Rohan

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

13th Anniversary

S. Jaspal Singh Aneja
28.07.1946 • 27.04.2009
Always in our Memories
Fondly remembered by
FAMILY MEMBERS and
Sintron Electronics P. Ltd
Singh Trading Company
MAK Electronics
CHENNAI

DEATH

SAD DEMISE
S. GOPINATH
Rtd. Deputy Commissioner of Commercial Taxes
PASSED AWAY ON
April 18, 2022
Mourned by:
Susheela (Wife) & Family

'TNEB 2.0' to double production by 2030

Distribution to be upgraded: Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (Tangedco) will roll out 'TNEB 2.0' to meet the surging power demand and modernise distribution by 2030.

It is aimed at doubling production and upgrading distribution to ensure uninterrupted supply. Electricity Minister V. Senthilbalaji, presenting the demand for grants for the Energy Department in the Assembly on Tuesday, said 'TNEB 2.0' was aimed at more than doubling production from 33,877 MW to 77,153 MW (including the Central and State share). The State's own generation capacity would go up from 7,175 MW to 41,085 MW. He said the State, having met the highest demand of 17,196 MW on March 29 this year, was taking steps to maintain uninterrupted supply by buying power through medium- and short-term open access arrangements. He said that at a time when the thermal plants required 72,000 tonnes of coal a day, only 48,000 tonnes was received.

The Minister said load-shedding was carried out for two days in the last week owing to the shortage of electricity generation from a central station, and of coal. According to the data available, the demand had increased to a minimum of 15,000 MW daily since the DMK came to power, as against the average of 13,500 MW in the past two years. He also listed the power cuts that had happened under the previous government.

Indianness the only caste: PM

Modi virtually inaugurates 90th anniversary celebrations of Sivagiri pilgrimage

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that as Indians, the people of the country had only one caste: Indianness.

"We have only one religion – the dharma of service and duty. We have only one God – Mother India. Sree Narayana Guru's exhortation of 'One caste, one religion, one god' gives a spiritual dimension to our patriotism. We all know that no goal of the world is impossible for the united Indians," he said.

He was speaking after virtually inaugurating the yearlong 90th anniversary celebrations of the Sivagiri pilgrimage and the golden jubilee of the Brahma Vidyalaya.

Mr. Modi said drawing inspiration from the Guru, the country was serving the poor, downtrodden and backward, giving them their rights. The country was moving with the mantra of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas* and *Sabka Prayas*.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi releasing the logo to mark the 90th anniversary of Sivagiri pilgrimage in New Delhi.

The Guru talked of modernity but he also enriched Indian culture and values. He talked of education and science but never shied away from raising the glory of the dharma, faith, and traditions of India. The Guru campaigned against social evils and made India aware of its reality. He fought a logical and practical fight against discrimination in the name of casteism, Mr. Modi said.

The Prime Minister also gave the example of the *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* campaign, where the situation improved with speed as the government was able to create the right environment.

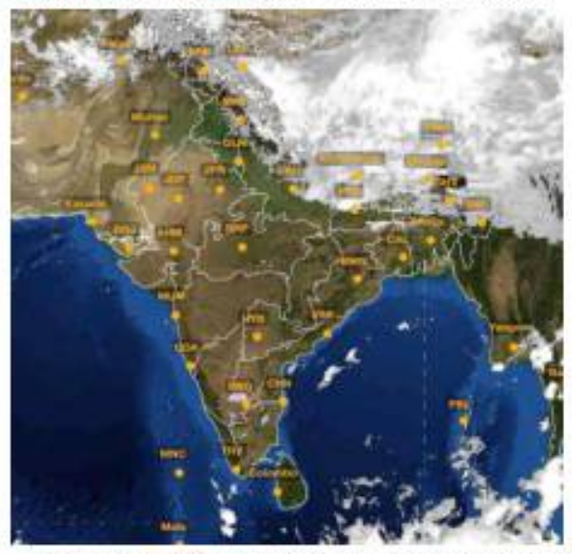
He also recalled the epoch-making meetings of Narayana Guru with titans such as Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, and Swami Vivekananda. At these meetings, seeds of reconstruction of India were sowed, the results of which were visible in today's India and the 75-year journey of the nation.

Sivagiri pilgrimage is held every year for three days from December 30. The pilgrimage focuses on the education, cleanliness, piety, handicrafts, trade and commerce, agriculture, science and technology, and organised endeavour.

Union Ministers Rajeev Chandrasekhar and V. Muraleedharan were present.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over central Maharashtra, Konkan & Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe. Heat wave conditions likely at isolated places over Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Telangana and Madhya Pradesh

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	–	37.0	27.8	Kozhikode	–	36.6	28.8
Ahmedabad	–	42.4	26.2	Kurnool	0.4	42.2	27.8
Aizawl	–	33.2	21.0	Lucknow	–	41.5	25.8
Allahabad	–	43.7	24.4	Madurai	–	37.7	28.4
Bengaluru	–	34.4	23.4	Mangaluru	–	35.0	25.0
Bhopal	–	–	24.0	Mumbai	–	34.9	25.6
Bhubaneswar	–	39.6	28.0	Mysuru	–	35.5	21.8
Chandigarh	–	40.0	24.8	New Delhi	–	40.8	24.9
Chennai	–	37.3	27.2	Patna	–	43.0	21.8
Coimbatore	–	36.6	25.2	Port Blair	–	33.4	25.8
Dehradun	–	37.8	20.0	Puducherry	–	35.0	26.3
Gangtok	0.6	22.9	14.7	Pune	–	40.1	23.3
Goa	6	35.1	22.0	Raipur	–	42.6	26.8
Guwahati	–	33.0	22.6	Ranchi	–	40.6	23.5
Hubballi	–	36.0	24.0	Shillong	–	28.0	16.9
Hyderabad	–	39.7	27.4	Shimla	–	29.0	17.3
Imphal	–	32.0	19.7	Srinagar	1	23.8	9.0
Jaipur	–	41.4	27.5	Thiruvananthapuram	–	34.1	27.0
Kochi	–	32.8	26.8	Tiruchi	–	39.5	27.5
Kohima	–	29.2	14.2	Vijayawada	–	39.8	27.4
Kolkata	–	38.7	28.7	Visakhapatnam	–	37.2	27.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — **Yesterday**

CITIES	SO2	NO2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	11	12	–	198	132	
Bengaluru	–	76	–	63	144	
Chennai	14	18	103	33	46	
Delhi	20	99	86	206	253	
Hyderabad	4	21	37	96	105	
Kolkata	23	16	28	101	109	
Lucknow	19	71	50	363	277	
Mumbai	25	25	83	63	119	
Pune	88	104	117	139	92	
Visakhapatnam	22	46	34	41	101	

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 341 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Puducherry recorded a healthy AQI score of 24

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

A.P. man carries son's body on bike

Farm worker was unable to afford ₹20,000 demanded by ambulance drivers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI

It was a heart-breaking sight to see a grief-stricken father carrying the body of his son on his shoulders, while riding pillion on a two-wheeler for 90 km to reach his native village, as ambulance turned out to be unaffordable.

A nine-year-old tribal boy Jaswa, who was admitted in Sri Venkateswara Ramnarain Ruia Government General Hospital for liver disorder, died on Monday. When his father, Narasimhulu, working as a gardener in a mango orchard, tried to shift the body to his native Chitvel village, the ambulance driver reportedly demanded ₹20,000.

Last resort: Narasimhulu carrying the body of his son on a two-wheeler from a hospital in Tirupati. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

As all efforts to convince the drivers failed, Narasimhulu, whose earns about ₹4,000 a month, appealed to his orchard owner to get an ambulance from outside. The hostile drivers of the in-house cartel not only chased away the vehicle, but also reportedly manhandled Narasimhulu.

Overcome with emotion, the disturbed father carried the body of his son on his shoulder, hopped on to a motorcycle to travel all the way to his native village.

The incident created a furore, when social activists and political leaders congregated at the hospital to protest against the attitude of the hospital management.

Calling the event 'unfortunate', Tirupati MP M. Gurumoorthy asked the Collector to put a system in place to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

Revenue Divisional Officer V. Kanakanarasa Reddy, who rushed to the hospital to probe the incident, inquired about the absence of 'Mahaprasthanam' vehicles. The three vehicles sanctioned to the hospital meant to ferry bodies free of cost to their destination were nowhere to be seen.

Four persons were taken into custody for their alleged involvement in the incident.

Prashant Kishor mark to be visible on TRS plenary today

Leaders likely to demand KCR to enter national politics

R. RAVIKANTH REDDY
HYDERABAD

Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) delegates are likely to demand Chief Minister, K. Chandrashekhar Rao to officially take plunge into national politics with all the vigour and several senior leaders are getting ready to use the plenary platform to endorse their demand as that of the party cadre.

The plenary being held with 3,000 delegates on Wednesday is likely to be dominated with discussions on the failures of the BJP government at the Centre and the need for KCR to present an alternative political and development plan to the country.

The plenary is likely to carry the stamp of the Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) on KCR's speech as the organisation generally works out minute details with regard to political resolutions and the larger message to be sent out from the platform. "So unlike previous years where KCR's mark was visible, this time it will be Prashant Kishor," a senior leader said, adding, "We are keenly waiting to hear him on how lays the election roadmap for us."

The CM is likely to explain in detail his initiation of the third front and the subsequent meetings with the leaders of political parties .

Govt. of Karnataka (Zilla Panchayat, Gadag)
Office of the Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Gadag

No.PRED/GDG/PB-3/Tender /2022-23/ 131 Date: 25.04.2022

E-Procurement Short term Tender Notification
Standard Bid Document KW-4 (Two Cover System)

Tenders are invited for the following 01 Nos. of works as per Karnataka Public Transparency Act-2000 Standard Bid Document KW-4 Rules from eligible contractor through e-Procurement Portal Eligible Contractors registered in the year **Head of A/c** 2021-22 5054-03-337-0-75 Spl.Fund of Panchayat Raj Engineering Department can Participate through,https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in

S. No.	Name of the work/ Work Indent	Amount Put to Tender (in Rs)	EMD Amount to be submitted through e-proc(in Rs.)	Period for Completion of work (including Monsoon)	Class of Contractor
1	IMPROVEMENTS TO ROAD FROM GUNJAL ROAD TO DHARAMAPUR BASVESHWARA TEMPLE IN LAXMESHWARA TALUK, GADAG DIST. UNDER 2021-22 5054 SPECIAL GRANT. **WORK_INDENT 89606/Call-2**	11165924.38	**167500/-**	9 Months	Valid PWD contractor participate KW-4

Date for Submission of filled in application and Schedule-B through website is: **22-04-2022 to 30-04-2022** Pre Bid meeting **29-04-2022** at 16:00 hrs Date of opening of Technical Bid **02-05-2022** at 16:30 hrs and opening of Financial Bid :**04-05-2022 at** 16:30 hrs. Successful eligible bidders of the Financial Bid must personally visit the above office for the difference amount of P.S.D. amount in the form of F.D.R. (as per Rule No.13) within 20 days from the date of publishing of the tender. Since it is electronic system and paper less there is no communication through letters, More details can be had during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division,Gadag.

DIPR/GADAG/43/2022-23/DESHPANDEPUBLICITY

COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

PUBLIC NOTICE
LOSS OF DOCUMENT

Public are hereby informed that, our clients are the absolute owners of below mentioned property and they represent that the Original Sale Deed dated 25.03.2010 registered as document No. BK-1-2480 of 2009-10; either lost or misplaced and they are unable to trace the same inspite of their best efforts and they have also lodged a complaint with the Local Police Station on 07.04.2022 regarding the loss of original document. If anyone finds the above-mentioned document, they are hereby requested to deliver the same to the undersigned and if any person were to deal with the said original title deed in respect of the below property other than our clients, such transactions will not bind them, and they will be doing so at their own risk and cost.

Property Details: All that piece and parcel of the Residential Apartment bearing No. **WETO5B303** on **Third Floor, Wing B, Tower TOSLINDEN**, having a super built up area of **1743.88 Sq. Ft.**, along with **529 Sq.Ft.** of Undivided Share of Land in the Residential Building thereon popularly known as "Godrej Woodman Estate" situate at Hebbal Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore together with right to use Two Top Covered Car Parking Space.

Ramya N Hiriyur, Advocate
Spree Mukhi Associates, Advocates
Unit No. 36 and 37, 4th Floor, Grand Majestic Mall, No. 12, 2nd Cross Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560 009 India.
Phone: +91 99860 61950 / 98454 44569

CITY CORPORATION BELAGAVI

No/CCB/PWD/SWM/TND/E-proc-01/2022-23 Dated:-26-04-2022

E-PROCUREMENT RE-TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Commissioner, City Corporation Belagavi invites tenders from eligible tenders for procurment of vehicles and machineris for management of Muncipal Solid waste for 3 works as per the standard tender document through E-Procurement portal for further details visit online web site https:/www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- Commissioner
City Corporation Belagavi

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-139/MCA/2022-23

Government of Karnataka
BANGALORE URBAN ZILLA PANCHAYATH
Office of the Executive Engineer Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, First Floor, Zilla Panchayat Building, S.Kariyappa Road, Banashankari (Near Banashankari Temple) Bangalore - 560070.

No. EE/PRED/BNG(U)/TND/AE-1/04/2022-23 Date: 25.04.2022

E-Procurement Short Term Tender Notice

Tenders are invited through e-procurement by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D. Bangalore Urban, **For MLA and MP Grants Works**. The work details can obtained from the e-procurement Website. The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before Dated: **04.05.2022 upto 4.00 pm**. Further details can be obtained from website at **http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** or contact this office during office working hours.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
PR.E.D, B.U, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CPI/286/Zenkar/2022-23

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
O&M Circle Office, Chikmagalur -577101, Ph: 08262-233313
CIN: U40109 KA 2002 SGC 030425

No:MESCOM/SEE/O&M/CKM/EE/AEE/AE/2022-23/1111 Date: 22.04.2022

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (E-Procurement Portal Only)

MESCOM Invites Tender for System Strengthening of distribution system works for the following village under **"Total Turn key Basis"** in Koppa Division, Chikmagalur Circle under **"Madari Grama Yojane"**. The interested eligible bidders may log on to website **www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **26.04.2022** for more information.

Sl No.	Village Name	Tender No.	Tender Amount	Reservation Category
1	Narve	MESCOM/2021-22/EL/ WORK_INDENT1782/ Call-2	37,55,805/-	ST

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Ele.), O&M Circle Chikmagaluru.

For Power Related Complaint & Assistance Cell Toll Free Number 1912

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No.: SEE/Tr(W&M)C/MRB/EE(O)/AEE-1/T-64/22-23/404-410 Date :26.04.2022

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION
(E-PROCUREMENT MODE ONLY)

KPTCL invites tender for the following works on Total Turn Key Basis.

(1) Bid Enquiry No.: SEE/Tr.(W&M)C/MRB/EE(O)/AEE-1/22-23/TTK/110KV LILO line to Kamalapura Dt.20.04.2022 Call-4. **For Replacement of Construction of 110KV LILO line to 110/11kV Kamalapura Sub-station on the existing DC towers from the tapping point for a distance of 5.715 kms along with construction of terminal bay at existing 110/11kV Kamalapura Sub-station in Hospet Taluk, Vijaynagar District, including supply of equipments/Materials, Erection (including civil works), testing and commissioning.**

(2) Bid Enquiry No.: SEE/Tr.(W&M)C/MRB/EE(O)/AEE-1/22-23/TTK/110 KV LILO line to Somasamudra Dt. 20.04.2022 Call-3. **For Construction of 110kV LILO line to 110/33/11kV Somasamudra Sub-station on existing DC Towers from the tapping point of 110kV Allipura-Bellary North Line for a distance of 3.96 Kms along with Construction of Terminal bay at existing 110/33/11kV Somasamudra Sub Station of Ballari Tq & Dist. including supply of equipments/ Meterials, Erection (Including civil works), testing and commissioning.**

(3) Bid Enquiry No.: SEE/Tr.(W&M)C/MRB/EE(O)/AEE-1/22-23/TTK/110 KV LILO line to Ganadal Dt. 20.04.2022. **For Construction of 1 No. of 110kV Terminal Bay at existing 110/11kV Sub-station Ganadal for the proposed 110kV LILO Line by utilizing 110kV DC towers from the tapping point of existing 110kV Kushtagi-Kanakagiri Line for a distance of 1.62 Kms in Yelaburga Taluk of Koppal District.**

Tenders will be received through e-Procurement mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the e-Procurement process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website www.kptcl.karnataka.gov.in on hyperlink "e-Procurement- KPTCL" or directly logging on to website: https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in" on or after 27.04.2022 at 11.30 Hrs. Other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Elec., Transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, Munirabad-583 233, Ph.: 08539-270094

PUBLIC NOTICE

Under the instruction and authority of my client Sri. **Devaraj. C,** son of Chikkarangappa, aged about 64 years, **Ex-director of KEB Employees Co-operative Society Ltd., now called as KPTCL Employees Co-operative Society ltd.,** @ BESCOM, DAS Building integrate control, 2nd Side, Rajajinagara, Bangalore-560010. I the undersigned issue this General Public Notice to all concerned General Public and members of KPTCL Employees Co-operative Society ltd., by way of information and for needful action in the matter as under a case in **O.S No.731 /19** and another case in **M.A/F.R. No 01/2022** is pending between Sri. C. Umesh & Others and KPTCL Employees Co-operative Society Ltd., Bangalore and the land owner K.T. Prakash and others before the **1st Additional senior civil judge Nelmangala and before the Hon'ble vacation Judge Bangalore Rural District, at Bangalore** and both above cases are pending for adjudication. even in spite of it the KPTCL Employees Co-operative Society Ltd., have come forward to action the sites of the suit schedule property, this is in violation and against law. However, for the general interest of the public and their interest this public notice is issued by way of knowledge to the public and their interest with a request not to take part in the public auction of the sale of sites to be held on 27.04.2022 as stated above in order to safe guard the interest of general public not to deal with the property i.e., sites which are under dispute before the above courts. Inspite of above said General notice issued to the General public if anybody venture to make any purchase of the sites formed under the suit schedule properties they are doing the same at their risk, liabilities and responsibilities. **Please note.**

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the immovable property measuring an extent of 14 acres 31 guntas (Fourteen Acres Thirty One Guntas) including kharab land of 4 acres and 31 guntas, which was converted under conversion order dated 01.10.1999 vide No. ALN SR(S) 18/1999-2000 passed by the Special Deputy Commissioner of Bengaluru District in the old Sy.No.19/3 (New Sy.No.19/3A2) wherein residential layout was formed with the approval of Nelamangala Planning Authority, situated at Kadabagere Village, Dasanapura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru District and bounded on as follows:

East By : Parvathamma's Land in Sy.No.16
west by : Dry land property in Sy.No.18 and 33.
North by : Land belonging to Eswarappa now sites formed by the KPTCL Society
South by : District Board Road (PWD Road), Bangalore.

B.M. Narayana Gowda, Advocate,
No.95, Guddadahali, SB Layout, 3rd Cross, Hebbal Bengaluru – 560032.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-3/TENDER/2022-23/299 DATE: 20/04/2022

Short Term E-Tender Notification

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi has invited item wise short term e-Tenders from Eligible registered contractors for the works coming under the jurisdiction of Chikodi PWD Division 8 works under head of account 5054-MDR Improvements, Amount put to tender is Minimum of Rs. 87.72 and Maximum of Rs. 219.30 Lakhs. Calendar of events : 1) Pre-bid meeting date: 11-05-2022 at 11.00 AM, at The O/o the under signed. 2) Last date for queries & clarifications : 13-05-2022 up to 5.30 PM 3) Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 16-05-2022 up to 5.00 PM 4) Date of opening of Financial bids (Single Cover System): 18-05-2022 at 4.30 PM 5) Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 18-05-2022 at 4.30 PM 6) Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids"

For more information & forms of tender can be downloaded from www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in & departmental web site www.kpwd.gov.in. Further details can be collected from O/o Executive Engineer Public Works Dept.,Division Chikkodi during working hours.

Sd/-Executive Engineer
PWD Division Chikkodi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-136/MCA/2022-23

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify the General public that, my client Sri. M. Madhu Babu, aged about 42 years, S/o. late K. Muniswamy, residing at No. 2M, 102, 2nd Main Road, East of NGEF, Kasturinagar, Bangalore-560 043, is the sole and absolute owner of the schedule property and he has entered into a registered Joint Development Agreement dated 02-08-2013, registered as document No. GBD-1-02008/2013-14, Stored in CD No. GBDD-76, in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Gowribidanur Taluk, Gowribidanur and he has also executed a registered General Power of Attorney dated 02-08-2013, Registered as Document No. GBD-4-00055/2013-14 Stored in CD No. GBDD-76, in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Gowribidanur Taluk, Gowribidanur in favour of and appointed Sri. Manish Garg, the Partner of M/s. Aashish Developer & Builders, A partnership Firm, having its Office at Rajni Ashish Apartment, No. 653, Behind Sriram Samrudhhi, Near Vibgyor School, Toobarahalli, Bangalore-560 066, to act on his behalf and to develop the schedule property. Now my client has cancelled/Revoked the said Joint development agreement and also General Power of Attorney on 06-12-2017, 08-01-2021 and 21-01-2021 by issuing the legal notices and hence I Requested on behalf of my client, the general Public not deal with the above said person or partnership Firm with regard to the schedule property, if do so they are held responsible for all future consequences and my client is not responsible for the same.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the converted land land measuring 33 acres 07 Guntas exclusive of 7 acres 18 guntas of Kharab in Sy No. 107 of Yeranagenahalli Village, 'D' Paiya Hobli, Gowribidanur Taluk and bounded on the:

East By : Land bearing Sy No. 112 and Yeranaganahalli Village Boundary.
West By : Land bearing Sy No. 112 and Chinchanahalli Village Boundary.
North By : Land bearing Sy No. 22 and Sy No. 112.
South By : Chinchanahalli Village Boundary.

SUBBI REDDY,
Advocate,
 # 34, Ganesha Krupa,
2nd Floor, 1st Main,
Gandhi Nagar, Bangalore-560009
Mob: No. 94488 83819.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **M/S BANGALORE CHAMBER OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, BANGALORE**, is desirous to sell the under mentioned property to my client and any person or persons claiming any interest on the under mentioned property or any part thereof, is hereby required to communicate the same to me, with documentary evidence at my Office, situated at **DOOR NO.2765/1A D13/A1, "KEYANS", 5TH MAIN ROAD, V.V. PURAM (V.V. MOHALLA), MYSORE – 570 002,** within 10 (Ten) days from the date of this publication, as otherwise the said sale will be completed without any reference or regard to any such purported claim or interest, which shall be deemed to have been waived for all intents and purposes.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

Unit No.102 in First Floor of **'BRIGADE RUBIX'**,having 1100 Sq. Ft. of built-up area and 560 Sq. Ft. of share in common areas, totally 1660 Sq. Ft. of super built up area approximately, with right to use Two Top Covered Car Parking Spaces in the Upper Basement Level and 789.99 Sq. Ft. of Undivided share, in the land out of 91,499 Sq. Ft., in Plot No.MYS 357 in Peenya Plantation, Bangalore North Taluk, Bangalore and Municipal No.20 (Old No.5), HMT Factory Main Road, Municipal Ward No.1, Bangalore.

Date : 25.04.2022
Place : Mysore

Dhirendra Kumar R. Mehta
Advocate
KEY-ANS LAW SOLUTIONS

Buying free speech

Musk should not do away with the safeguards Twitter has built against hate speech

After buying Twitter for $44 billion, billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk made a pitch for free speech. "I hope that even my worst critics remain on Twitter," he tweeted, "because that is what free speech means". He also likened Twitter to "a digital town square where matters vital to the future of humanity are debated". The world's richest man talking about free speech and humanity's future after buying one of the most influential social media platforms seems to be the most politically correct thing to do. But it is certainly ironic considering that the billionaire buyer had no qualms over the years about using the social media platform to aggressively promote his business interests as well as block and, some may say even bully, critics. But in saying what he has said, Mr. Musk has put the spotlight on what has been a sensitive issue for Twitter in recent years – its inability to convincingly come across as a platform where healthy conversations can take place. Often, those indulging in hate speech and threatening violence have found full play on the platform until authorities put in a request for withholding of the offensive tweets. Whatever it did toward that goal – from creating policies around abuse and disinformation to unleashing technology for spotting problematic content early – did little to change the perception. One need not even consider its move to permanently ban the then U.S. President Donald Trump to make the point that it, at times, has come across as an interested player rather than a disinterested platform – its inconsistencies in labelling content as problematic would alone suffice.

What Mr. Musk does next toward promoting free speech on the platform would be keenly watched. The first challenge to this is the fact that free speech is understood differently by people belonging to different political ideologies. But, Mr. Musk is all for a light touch in moderating content. CNN quoted him as saying in a recent TED conference that, "If in doubt, let the speech exist." He added, "If it's a gray area, I would say, let the tweet exist. But obviously in the case where there's perhaps a lot of controversy, you would not necessarily want to promote the tweet." He is also in favour of increasing trust by making the algorithms open source and using technology to spot spam bots. Would that improve the situation? Perhaps. Would he do away with the safeguards Twitter has built over time? One hopes not. But Mr. Musk may realise in the journey that the issue of free speech is not so black-and-white from the vantage point of a platform owner. For, he is no longer just only a Twitter user with over 80 million followers.

Myopic view

Sportspersons should not be penalised for the actions of their political leaders

Last Wednesday's decision by Wimbledon to decline entries from Russian and Belarusian players for the 2022 edition of the world's premier tennis tournament has opened a can of worms. With the Russia-Ukraine war raging, the All England Club stated that "it would be unacceptable for the Russian regime to derive any benefits from the involvement of Russian or Belarusian players with The Championships". Even as the Club acknowledged it was hard on individual athletes, chairman Ian Hewitt said "they will suffer for the actions of the leaders of the Russian regime". It will affect dozens of players including men's World No.2 and reigning US Open champion Daniil Medvedev, World No.8 Andrey Rublev, women's World No.4 Aryna Sabalenka and two-time Major winner Victoria Azarenka. The move was by no means unique; in March, World Athletics had similarly ostracised Russian and Belarusian athletes. But Wimbledon's decision was unprecedented because unlike other sports, tennis more or less transcends nationalism. Except in team events such as the Davis Cup and the Billie Jean King Cup – from which Russia is currently banned – players' entry into a tournament is based solely on ranking and not nationality. Criticism from legends like Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova was rooted in this fact, so was the pushback from ATP and WTA, the governing bodies of the men's and women's tours.

That Wimbledon could act unilaterally has much to do with tennis' splintered administration. There is no umbrella organisation that directs the sport; the four Majors, ATP, WTA and International Tennis Federation act independently. There is not an autonomous players' union either. Shorn of checks and balances, Wimbledon, to seemingly avoid the optics of a Russian or Belarusian player holding aloft the trophy – a genuine possibility considering Sabalenka was a semifinalist in 2021 – thought it was best to impose a blanket ban. But this militates against the principle of fairness and equal opportunity and may force the ATP and WTA to strip the event of ranking points, turning it into a glorified exhibition tournament. The episode also brings into focus the role of the British government, whose guidelines Wimbledon said it had taken into account. Last month, Sports Minister Nigel Huddleston demanded that Russian players attest "they were not supporters of Vladimir Putin", despite Medvedev and Rublev publicly calling for peace. In fact, Mr. Huddleston's view was similar to the one espoused by Ukrainian players led by Elina Svitolina, a two-time Grand Slam semifinalist. While one can empathise with the Ukrainians' feelings, considering their tragic lived experiences, it sets a damaging precedent when nations start penalising individual citizens for the actions of political leaders. It appears that both Wimbledon and the British government do not want to see the wood for the trees.

Macron's re-election, a victory with challenges

France has voted, Europe is relieved, and the French President needs to move fast to douse the flames of polarisation

RAKESH SOOD

Last Sunday, French voters gave President Emmanuel Macron his second term and Europe heaved a collective sigh of relief. Though Mr. Macron scored a convincing victory over his far-right-wing challenger, Marine Le Pen, his victory margin diminished when compared to the 2017 run-off, from 66% to 58.5%, while Ms. Le Pen improved her score from 34% to 41.5%, reflecting the changing character of French politics. Nevertheless, given that only two popularly elected Presidents have won second terms (François Mitterrand in 1988 and Jacques Chirac in 2002), Mr. Macron has reason to feel chuffed. European Union leaders, facing twin challenges of the Russian war in Ukraine and a tepid recovery from COVID-19, have enthusiastically welcomed Mr. Macron's victory given Ms. Le Pen's overt Euroscepticism.

A changing politics

France's two-step voting process means that in the first round, voters express their real preferences; in the second round, with the field narrowed to two, they reject the one they dislike more.

At the beginning of the campaign in February, there were a dozen candidates, but by the end of March, most were fizzling out. The first round, held on April 10, showed the decimation of the two traditional parties that have ruled France since the 1960s, the centre-right Republicans and the centre-left Socialists. Republican candidate Valérie Pécresse, who had been part of Jacques Chirac's team and was later a Higher Education Minister, managed a 4.8% vote share, while Socialist candidate Anne Hidalgo, mayor of Paris since 2014, got a mere 1.7%. From the days of Socialist Presidents like Mitterrand and Hollande, and Republican Presidents like Sarkozy, Chirac and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, this was a rout.

These two parties have been losing ground, from a collective 56% of the vote in the first round in 2012, to 27% in 2017 when Mr. Macron emerged on the scene and captured the imagination of voters as a pro-Europe, business-friendly, forward-looking liberal. In 2017, this enabled him to redefine the Centrist vote, successfully poaching from both the Republican and Socialist bases.

Five years later, Mr. Macron had a record to defend and counter the image of being a pro-rich, aloof and elitist President. His response to the *gilets jaunes* (yellow vest) protests lacked empathy. Ms. Le Pen capitalised on this by seeking to appear more human and approachable, a single mother and a cat lover.

A rough campaign

In the first round on April 10, Mr. Macron led with 27.8%, followed by Ms. Le Pen with 23.1% and left-wing populist Jean Luc Mélenchon (France Unbowed) with a credible 21.9%. Extreme-right-wing journalist turned candidate Èric Zemmour, whose presence helped Ms. Le Pen appear relatively moderate, also got 7% vote. Other mainstream candidates Jean Lasalle, formerly MoDem (Democratic Movement) and Yannick Jadot (Greens) only managed 3.1% and 4.6%, respectively. The fact that far-right and far-left parties accounted for 58% of the vote in the first round reflects the growing polarisation in domestic French politics. Centre-left voters switched from Ms. Hidalgo and Mr. Jadot to Mr. Melenchon and centre-right from Ms. Pecresse to Mr. Macron.

The slow rightward drift in French politics has sharpened since the terrorist attacks in 2015 and the consequent debates on

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identity and *laïcité* (French version of secularism) emerged as key themes in the early weeks till the Ukraine war and rising cost of living assumed priority.

Mr. Zemmour's campaign exploited the 'great replacement' theory, (originally propounded by Renault Camus) – that the non-white, non-Christian and non-French are gradually replacing the white Christian French population. Mr. Zemmour grew his base by asking young French people if they were willing to live as a minority in the land of their ancestors. Ms. Le Pen, conscious of the need to retain her base lest they drifted to Mr. Zemmour, promised a ban on the hijab (headscarf) and a constitutional amendment that would distinguish between "native born French" and "others" for access to education, housing and other social benefits, and restricting citizenship to only those who have "earned it and fully assimilated."

Mr. Macron was late to join the campaign, thinking that he could ensure support by appearing presidential, involved with the geopolitics of the war in Ukraine. Since December when tensions began rising, he has had nearly two dozen telephone conversations with Russian President Vladimir Putin, visited Moscow and Kyiv and had multiple exchanges with North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Union (EU) leaders. He filed his candidature on March 3, a day before the deadline and spent little time on the campaign trail before the first round. His poll ratings slipped from 30% in early March by five points leading to a strategy shift.

It was only in April that Mr. Macron realised that the "progressive liberal centrist" platform that had delivered victory in 2017 was no longer working. The field was dominated either by a utopian extremism of the Left or a nationalist extremism bordering on racism on the Right. Mr. Macron began to talk about building a 'dam' to preserve the Centre. To shift the debate from 'identity', he promised full employment in five years, tax cuts for households and small businesses and softened his stand on raising the retirement age from 62 years to 65, spreading it over a nine-year timeframe.

For the second round, the debate turned personal. Mr. Macron highlighted Ms. Le Pen's ties with Mr. Putin, describing him as her 'banker', called her a 'climate sceptic', blamed her policy as 'spelling the end of the EU' and made the election a 'referendum on secularism and Europe'. Ms. Le Pen blamed him for ignoring the rising cost of food and fuel and declining pensions, sought a 'Europe of nations' rather than an EU, called him 'a climate hypocrite', and the election a referendum on "Macron or France'.

The obstacles, from June

Having secured his second term, Mr. Macron urgently needs to douse the flames of polarisation. The 72% turnout on Sunday is the lowest in a presidential run-off since 1969. In addition, of the 34.5 million votes cast, the three million blanks or spoilt ballots reflect disenchantment with both candidates. Mr. Melenchon has declared that Macron's presidency 'is floating in a sea of abstentions and blank or null ballots'. Over a third of the voters did not vote for Mr. Macron and many left-leaning voters only did so because they hated the far-right Ms. Le Pen more.

National Assembly elections are due in June and if the Left take the Assembly, Mr. Melenchon could become Prime Minister; a prospect of co-habitation that ensures policy gridlock. In such a scenario, polarisation will only increase and Mr. Macron's centrist experiment would be a short-lived reprieve from the rightward shift.

That is why at his victory speech at the foot of the Eiffel tower, Mr. Macron struck a conciliatory note, thanking those who helped defeat Ms. Le Pen and "promising to be a president for all."

Relief in Europe, India

Such was the concern in Europe about the election that in an unprecedented move, the Portuguese and Spanish Prime Ministers, António Costa and Pedro Sánchez, and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz co-authored an Op-Ed in the *Le Monde* on April 21, urging French voters to reject Ms. Le Pen. The congratulatory messages pouring in from western capitals reflect relief as a Le Pen victory would have severely damaged western unity, at a critical moment in Europe.

India too has reason to be happy with Mr. Macron's victory. India and France have enjoyed a solid strategic partnership, established in 1998 that has expanded to cover cooperation in defence, nuclear and space sectors, climate issues and renewables, cybersecurity and counter-terrorism. A French presence in the Indo-Pacific has prodded the EU too to shift towards an Indo-Pacific strategy.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be travelling to Germany and Denmark on a bilateral visit in the first week of May. It provides a welcome opportunity to spend a day in Paris to congratulate Mr. Macron and impart new momentum to the relationship.

Rakesh Sood is a former diplomat who served as India's Ambassador to France and is presently Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation

'Mission Antyodaya' should not fall by the wayside

With the right momentum, the project can help transform rural India — in terms of development and social justice

M.A. OOMMEN

The Indian Constitution mandates local governments to prepare and implement plans for 'economic development and social justice' (Articles 243G and 243W). Several complementary institutions and measures such as the gram sabha to facilitate people's participation, the District Planning committee (DPC) to prepare bottom up and spatial development plans, the State Finance Commission (SFC) to ensure vertical and horizontal equity, one-third reservation for women (in most States, now 50%), population-based representation to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe communities, and so on were introduced to promote this goal. Even so, India's decentralisation reforms (with no parallel in federal history) have failed to take the decentralisation process forward in delivering social justice and progress in rural India.

This article argues that given the right momentum, the 'Mission Antyodaya' project of the Government of India launched in 2017-18 (and cast in a convergence framework avowedly to eradicate poverty in its multiple dimensions among rural households) bears great promise to revive the objectives of these great democratic reforms. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the Ministry of Rural Development act as the nodal agents to take the mission forward.

The Bharatiya Janata Party government which came to power in 2014 had several reasons to reimagine rural development. The traditional poverty line linked to the calorie-income measure, religiously pursued by the former Planning Commission with great academic support proved inane and failed to serve as a purposive policy tool.

Moreover, the revealing statistics brought into the public domain by the SocioEconomic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011 were 'demanding' remedial intervention. That 90% of rural households have no salaried jobs, 53.7 million households are landless, 6.89 million female-headed households have no adult member to support, 49% suffer from multiple deprivations, 51.4% derive sustenance from manual casual labour, 23.73 million are with no room or only one room to live, and so on (https://secc.gov.in). cannot be easily dismissed by any democratic government. Paradoxically, this happened in a country that spends more than ₹3 trillion every year for the rural poor from the Central and State Budgets and bank-credit linked self-help programmes (https://bit.ly/3KfUF1O). Indeed, the 'Mission Antyodaya' project was a needed intervention.

Key goal

The main objective of 'Mission Antyodaya' is to ensure optimum use of resources through the convergence of various schemes that address multiple deprivations of poverty, making gram panchayat the hub of a development plan. This planning process (whose intellectual heritage is traced to the people's plan of Kerala) is supported by an annual survey that helps to assess the various development gaps at the gram panchayat level, by collecting data regarding the 29 subjects assigned to panchayats by the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.

These subjects are broken down into 112 parameters for data

RITU RAJ KONWAR

collection using detailed questionnaires. Also, data regarding health and nutrition, social security, good governance, water management and so on are also collected. The idea of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to identify the gaps in basic needs at the local level, and integrating resources of various schemes, self-help groups, voluntary organisations and so on to finance them needs coordination and capacity-building of a high order. If pursued in a genuine manner, this can foster economic development and inter-jurisdictional equity. Although two major reports, one on infrastructure and service gaps and the other on a composite index, have been in the public domain, they do not seem to have attracted public discussion.

Gaps in gram panchayats

The 'Mission Antyodaya' survey in 2019-20 for the first time collected data that shed light on the infrastructural gaps from 2.67 lakh gram panchayats, comprising 6.48 lakh villages with 1.03 billion population. The data set updated annually enables development planning sectorally and spatially, from the village level to the State and the country as a whole (https://bit.ly/3kbJpsr). For an insight into the gap report, we may use the State-wise break-up of the score-values. The maximum score values assigned will add up to 100 and are presented in class intervals of 10. While no State in India falls in the top score bracket of 90 to 100, 1,484 gram panchayats fall in the bottom bracket. Even in the score range of 80 to 90, 10 States and all Union Territories do not appear. The total number of gram panchayats for all the 18 States that have reported adds up only to 260, constituting only 0.10% of the total 2,67,466 gram panchayats in the country. If we consider a score range of 70-80 as a respectable attainment level, Kerala tops but accounts for only 34.69% of gram panchayats of the State, the corresponding all-India average is as low as 1.09%. Even for Gujarat which comes next to Kerala, gram panchayats in this bracket are only 11.28%.

Social justice still distant

The composite index data, a sort of surrogate for human development, are also not encouraging. Although only 15 gram panchayats in the country fall in the bottom range below 10 scores, more than a fifth of gram panchayats in India are below the 40 range. All the gram panchayats in Kerala are above this and stand out in contrast to the rest of the States. While in the country as a whole only 7.37% have a composite index in the 70-100 bracket, Gujarat (which tops the list) has 20.5% in the range, followed by Kerala (19.77%) and Karnataka (17.68%). The gap report and the composite index show in unmistakable terms that building 'economic development and social justice' remains a distant goal even after 30 years of the decentralisation reforms and nearly 75 years into Independence.

Nearly four years have passed since the former Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley, announced the Mission Project in his Budget speech of 2017-18 with the specific target "to make 50,000 gram panchayats poverty free by 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of Gandhiji". Nothing happened but the goal posts have been moved to 2022, to coincide with the 75th anniversary of Independence, on August 15. Removing goal posts is a poor game.

Rectify these lapses

The scope to reduce the growing rural-urban disparities is tremendous. Given the 'saturation approach' (100% targets on select items) of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the possibilities of realising universal primary health care, literacy, drinking water supply and the like are also immense. But there is no serious effort to converge resources (the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the National Rural Livelihood Mission, National Social Assistance Programme, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, etc.) and save administrative expenses.

Another lapse is the failure to deploy the data to India's fiscal federalism, particularly to improve the transfer system and horizontal equity in the delivery of public goods in India at the sub-State level. Evidently the Fifteenth Finance Commission has missed it. The constitutional goal of planning and implementing economic development and social justice can be achieved only through strong policy interventions. The policy history of India has been witness to the phenomenon of announcing big projects and failing to take them to their logical consequence. 'Mission Antyodaya' is a striking case in recent times.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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People show the way

It is most gratifying that the residents of Jahangirpuri – across all faiths, children and adults – took out a *Tiranga yatra* to spread the message of peace and communal harmony. They deserve full praise. In one stroke they have shown the political class in a poor light. The event should open the eyes of all political leaders who ought to have made efforts to ensure communal harmony.

J.P. REDDY,
Nalgonda, Telangana

■ The bold step by the residents in Delhi to unite despite the traumatic events sends a strong message to the ruling establishment that there is still hope for India – there are many who will turn away from the politics of hatred. This gesture of solidarity, a rarity today, has offset the stony silence by some of the top leaders.

ABDUL ASSIS P.A.,
Kandvesankadavu, Thrissur, Kerala

■ It is very reassuring to read about there being basic harmony between communities. What the Government could not achieve, as peace and understanding, has been proven by ordinary people.

MOHAMMED IKRAMULLA,
Hyderabad

Stop food wastage

Scientists predict the world population crossing the 10-billion mark by 2050, frighteningly enough where the globe will face severe food shortages. In the next 27 years the demand for food will have increased by 70%. In such a scary foreboding scenario, the Food Waste Index Report 2021 released by the UN Environment Programme says that in 2019, around 931 million tonnes of food were wasted at the global level, with 61% from households. Governments and other international bodies must develop policies to reduce food loss and wastage. There must also be coordination among food supply chain actors. Educating people on "safe food handling, proper food storage in households and understanding 'best before' dates" will be of use.

R. SIVAKUMAR,
Chennai

India as a democratic superpower

The country is more than capable of providing leadership that the world often needs

TONY ABBOTT

Foreign Ministers of the Quad (India, Australia, United States and Japan) in Tokyo on October 6, 2020. • AP

As a Rhodes scholar travelling from Sydney to Oxford, way back in 1981, I didn't feel that I could fly over nearly a billion Indians without stopping to learn, and to pay my respects. Even then, in the three months I spent back-packing here, it was obvious to me that democratic, free India was going to be one of the world's leading countries.

Today, with the world's third largest economy – at least in purchasing power terms – with a vibrant free market, a booming tech sector, a population that's eager to learn and to innovate, a gloriously rumbustious press, and an honest judiciary; with a government that's rapidly closing the infrastructure deficit; and with an openness to the wider world, symbolised by a vast diaspora including 7,00,000 Indian-born Australians, India is no longer the emerging democratic super power that I frequently referenced as Prime Minister.

India has emerged as a democratic superpower, more than capable of providing leadership that the world often needs and that America cannot always give. These ominous times, that would have seemed almost unthinkable just a few years back, when history had supposedly ended, are India's chance to step up in support of free countries and free people. Because make no mistake, this newly minted "no limits" partnership, this new Beijing-Moscow axis, these dictators on the march; unless deterred, or somehow touched for the better, will end what until recently have been the best times ever.

'War of national extermination'

Russia's latest war has not been provoked by anything Ukraine has done. It is Ukraine's existence as a free and independent country that Russia's ruler objects to. It is a war of national extermination to which no free country can be indifferent. I know this because Vladimir Putin told me himself, when I verbally shirt-fronted him after a Russian missile battery shot down MH17 in 2014, killing 38 Australians among 298 victims, insisting as he did even then, in the first phase of this invasion, that the Ukrainian government was fascist, that Ukrainians were really Russians, and that Ukraine had no right to exist as an independent country.

He wants to correct what he sees as the greatest geo-political disaster of the last century by restoring Greater Russia. That is his dream, and it means that the Baltic states and Poland are next in the firing line, once Ukraine is pulverised into submission, war crime by war crime, atrocity by atrocity, in a war his pride cannot let him lose, and his ministers are too indoctrinated or intimidated to stop.

And do not think that China is not watching, nursing grievances of its own over its "century of humiliation", determined to take Taiwan, and to demonstrate that China is once more the Middle Kingdom, the world's top country, around which all others must cluster, tremble and obey. Australia knows what a world dominated by China would look like, because of the 14 demands publicly made of us in late 2020, that we accept all Chinese investments, Chinese students, cease all criticism of China, and end our alliance with the United States.

As a fellow member of the Quad, Australia stands with India in resisting Chinese aggression over the line of control in Ladakh. That's what Australia has always done: stand with the victims of aggression, from Belgium in the Great War, to Poland in World War II, to the people of East Timor when they sought their independence, to the people of Iraq against Islamic State in my time as PM, and now Ukraine to which Australia was the first country to dispatch heavy armoured vehicles.

Trade as a strategy

Russia's attack on Ukraine has caused commodity prices to spike and disrupted vital supply lines, for food quite as much as for energy. With these dictators set on national glory, everything bends to the power of the state; and trade is just a strategy to be turned on and off like a tap. Almost unavoidably, the world will be more disrupted as countries rethink who can be relied on.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi grasped this when he withdrew India from the China-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership deal. These times have turned fraught; demanding a re-think of the China-centred globalisation of the past couple of decades – notwithstanding a world that, until very recently, was more free, safer, and richer than ever before.

As long as China has brutal and hegemonic ambitions, businesses in countries like mine have a patriotic duty not to be dependent on a country that could threaten us. But that's also an opportunity for India, trustworthy trade partner, to substitute for China in fellow democracies' supply chains requiring manufacturing at scale, quality and price.

India's trade minister Piyush Goyal was right when he said that the new Australia-India trade deal's ambition just to double trade within a decade was too modest. Why shouldn't PM Modi's "make in India" campaign extend to all the consumer lines and the intermediate goods currently made in China?

India's standing in the world

Especially now that it is clearer that trade can only be free and fair if it is based on the values that democracies largely have in common. For obvious reasons, independent India sometimes kept the West at a distance. But now, 75 exemplary years on, with its democracy entrenched, there is no reason for mutual wariness, or for India to be anyone's junior partner. If the free world is to have a leader 50 years hence, that's likely to be India.

As a country that earned its freedom, most honourably, largely through moral suasion and peaceful protest, through satyagraha, India would know the love and passion that is now moving millions of Ukrainians to risk everything they hold dear for that which they hold dearest of all, freedom itself.

If there's one country whose traditional friendship with Russia, and whose historic aloofness from power plays, and whose palpable goodwill to all might just get through to the Kremlin and to the ordinary Russians whose lives are also being blighted by this war, it is India.

To the extent the Russian leader still has a conscience, India is uniquely placed to appeal to it, should it have a go at summoning the better angels of Russia's nature to a new beginning; so that what's now being torn down in spite may yet be rebuilt in spirit of generosity and goodwill.

Why not exercise the moral leadership, of which India might be more capable than any other country, to urge Russia to give up the territory it has seized? If Russia listens, untold further bloodshed would be averted.

Even unheeded, being the great power, most ready to put principle before calculation would only enhance India's standing in the world.

Tony Abbott was the 28th Prime Minister of Australia

A splintered 'nerve centre'

Services of urban local bodies have to be integrated with the ICCC for improving amenities for people

PUSHKAL SHIVAM

Networked infrastructure in cities of the global South seems to be a chimera that everyone wants to ride. It is mostly the people, however, who occupy networks that make infrastructure work for our cities. Take, for example, the water supply distribution lines in most Indian cities. In its current form, no sensor may ever replace the "linemen" who work the valves spread across the city, often with a simple rod, to regulate the supply of water. And yet, a different logic of governing infrastructure is in the making.

The Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri recently announced that Integrated Command and Control Centres (ICCCs) have been established in 80 cities selected as part of the Smart Cities Mission, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The ICCC projects being executed may be seen as part of the "pan city" component of the mission which envisages "application of selected Smart Solutions to the existing [emphasis added] city-wide infrastructure".

Five pillars of ICCC

The overbearing images of a hall with giant video walls notwithstanding, an ICCC has five basic pillars: first is bandwidth; second, the sensors and edge devices which record and generate real-time data; third, various analytics which are software that draw on data captured by end devices to generate "intelligence"; fourth is data storage; fifth, the ICCC software which may be described as, in MoHUA's words, "a system of systems" – the anchor for all other application specific components and has been described as the "brain and nervous system" of the city.

Central to the promise of ICCC is the idea of "predictive modelling" which uses data to generate inputs on not just how the city is but also how it can be. It could tell which direction the city is growing in; it could predict future real estate hot spots; it could identify and predict all accident-prone spots in the city, and it could predict the bus routes prone to crowding. This is in sharp contrast to how things actually work on the ground: our frames of response are retrospective and we are constantly retrofitting our cities as the primary mode of transformation.

The ICCC may be seen in sync with the functions of an urban local body (ULB) under the 74th Constitutional Amendment, towards improving services for people. Several contradictions may arise in this context.

First, the project is being executed under the aegis of the Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) constituted under the Companies Act, 2013, in the selected cities. Projects of the SPV that overlap with core ULB areas have been a source of tension between the two, one that the cities are still learning to resolve. Unless the core staff of ULB working across departments such as health, town planning, water supply, etc., adopt the ICCC systems, it risks being a splintered "nerve centre".

One solution is to build a team in the SPV that can act as a bridge, inspire more users, and develop capacities; however, as "contract employees" they may be subject to the mercurial aspects of administration. Second, there is the risk of permanent underutilisation of the system. With poor integration with ULB services, and not just software integration but also in terms of workflows and SOPs, the functional capability may continue to be titled towards video surveillance. Even with the latter, configuration of video surveillance analytics and its application has been less than perfect and the police department operators often use the systems manually to screen the footage in the wake of an incident which defeats the purpose of ICCC.

Third, the sizeable investments required create contradictions in some cities which are otherwise struggling for funds to upgrade their basic infrastructure and services. One of the key questions to gauge the success of ICCC in future, maybe to ask, if cities are choosing to build and sustain these systems out of their own revenue or untied devolution funds. If not, ICCCs may struggle to outlive the exhaustion of mission grants. And finally, despite the efforts to keep procurement vendor-agnostic, some segments of ICCC are still dominated by select industry players who may dictate terms to the city or engage in arm-twisting for payments.

'War rooms'

The ICCCs in some cities served as a "war room" during the COVID-19 pandemic, and its application is cited as a success. Despite its usefulness, the success of such "war rooms" lay in the fact that the municipal, district and the police administration were bound together by the compulsions of the pandemic, which may not be normally forthcoming. Unless the services of the ULB and the people taking them to the residents of a city are "integrated" into ICCCs, they may turn out to be as the images show: a hall with giant video walls, a rather expensive one.

Pushkal Shivam is the former deputy CEO of a Smart City SPV in Maharashtra

STATE OF PLAY

The politics around power

The tussle involving KSEB comes at a time when the State's power sector is poised for changes

TIKI RAJWI

Over the past several weeks, Kerala's capital Thiruvananthapuram has been witnessing a protracted struggle between the management and the pro-Left officers' association of the government-run power utility, the Kerala State Electricity Board Ltd (KSEB).

Even for a State where strikes are scarcely a novelty, the stand-off has remained headline material, largely due to the multiplicity of narratives in play. The suspension of a woman officer, who allegedly went on unauthorised leave in March, had drawn protests from the pro-CPI(M) officers' organisation – the KSEB Officers' Association (KSEBOA).

The KSEBOA called a half-day protest on April 5, to which the management responded with a dies-non order. The protest, however, went ahead as planned, and two more officers – the state president and general secretary of the association – were placed under suspension. Soon after, the KSEBOA began an indefinite stir outside the KSEB headquarters in Thiruvananthapuram, urging the management to drop its confrontational approach. Although all three officers were subsequently reinstated in service, they were shunted out from their posts.

On April 20, the Electricity Minister, K. Krishnankutty, announced that the KSEB management would settle the matter peacefully, but the tensions show no signs of easing. The KSEBOA has ended the first stage of its stir, and is poised for a much more intense second phase.

At one level, the entire episode is perceived as an intra-institutional tug-of-war – a 1998 batch IAS officer heading the state-run company versus individuals leading the KSEBOA. But beyond it, the tussle has ignited a debate on trade unionism, although the management argues that the statute permits only workmen category to engage in trade union activities.

The KSEB, which employs 33,000 people and has a consumer base of 1.3 crore, is one of the better performing institutions in the State.

While Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan himself is yet to make any direct reference to the current problems in the KSEB, several of his party colleagues have backed the KSEBOA. CITU state president Anathalavattom Anandan, a CPI(M) veteran, was especially critical of the management. The fact that the power portfolio is held by a non-CPI(M) Minister has not made things any easier for the pro-CPI(M) unions in the KSEB. Tensions between the management and the pro-Left unions have threatened to boil over ever since the new CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) dispensation came to power under Mr. Vijayan for a second consecutive term in 2021.

For the power sector, the second stint brought an important change. After 1987, the CPI(M) – whenever it came to power since, that is – has not let go of the portfolio. But this time, it went to an LDF constituent, the Janata Dal (Secular). After Mr. Krishnankutty, a JD(S) veteran who handled Water Resources in the previous LDF government, took over as Electricity Minister, the KSEB also got a new chairman and managing director (CMD) in B. Ashok. The twin changes loosened the grip the KSEBOA had maintained for years.

Mr. Krishnankutty and Mr. Ashok have gone on record stating that the KSEB has marked an operational profit of ₹1,400 crore in the 2021-22 fiscal, the highest since the KSEB metamorphosed into a government-owned company in 2013. But pro-CPI(M) officers claim that the credit should go to M.M. Mani, the CPI(M) leader who was Electricity Minister in the previous LDF dispensation. It goes without saying that it is in the best interests of the LDF government to return the power utility to normalcy. The tussle is happening at a thoroughly inopportune moment as the State's power sector is poised for major changes.

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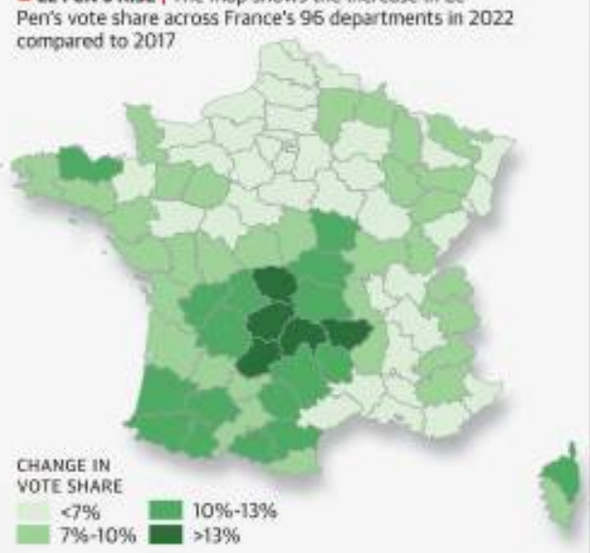
DATA POINT

Rise of the far-right in Europe

Centrist Emmanuel Macron may have got re-elected for a second term as the French President, but his vote share did not increase even in one department (an administrative division consisting of communes) in 2022. Whereas Marine Le Pen's vote share increased across the country giving the far-right their best-ever result. The result has also revealed an increasing level of voter apathy. The 72% turnout was the lowest since 1969. Also a significant share of voters intentionally cast invalid votes to register their anger. The rise of the Right in Europe's politics is not limited to France. An analysis of 18 nationalist parties across Europe shows that the far-right parties have secured a considerable vote share in many countries and have increased their voter base in some of them. By **Jasmin Nihalani** and **Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

French far-right party National Rally's presidential candidate Marine Le Pen

LE PEN'S RISE | The map shows the increase in Le Pen's vote share across France's 96 departments in 2022 compared to 2017



While her vote share increased across all the 96 departments analysed, the rise was more pronounced in the rural south

VOTER APATHY | The chart shows the % share of registered voters who voted for a candidate (■), the % share who came to vote but cast an invalid or blank vote (■) and the % share who were absent (■).

Abstentions were at their highest level in 2022, while the share of valid votes have dwindled

RIGHT INFLUENCE | The dot plot shows the vote share secured by nationalist parties* in the most recent (●) elections and the one before that (●). While the vote share was considerably higher across many nations, in many countries they are on an increasing trend. The name of the country is marked in **bold** while the party name is in *italic*

SOURCE: IDEA.INT, INTERIOR MINISTRY OF FRANCE; (*) AS IDENTIFIED BY THE BBC

The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 27, 1972

Russia curious about American life

Moscow, April 25: The questions came fast: What's the cheapest car in America? Are there many service stations? How do you sell a car ? How do classified ads work ? Can Negros ride on buses ? Why is your medical care so expensive ? Isn't Angela Davis being persecuted because she is black and a communist ? What do you think of the war on Vietnam ? A young American sporting sideburns a handlebar moustache and brightly striped shirt leaned back against a mustard coloured Pinto subcompact car and fielded queries from some of the 17,000 Soviet citizens who flowed daily through the American exhibition on research and development at Moscow's Sokolniki Park. Often, the listeners' faces showed surprise at the answers. The size and intensity of the crowds comes in the face of obstacles that have made some American officials believe that the travelling exhibition is the part of the American-Soviet cultural exchanges that Soviet authorities dislike the most apparently because it gives ordinary citizens a chance to check out the information they receive about America in the Soviet press.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 27, 1922

The curse of dualism again

Mr. St. Nihal Singh has pointedly drawn our attention in the columns of the "Hindu" to the anomalous nature of India's status in the British Empire. What the status of India is and whether it was really enhanced by the Montagu regime is an interesting question to consider. The outstanding fact is that India is not at present a dominion in the accepted sense of that term. Even those who wildly experience all the blessings of freedom in the Montagu reforms have admitted it. The Rt. Hon. Mr. Sastri himself who feels so much for the good name of Britain that is being tarnished by the wickedness of the Hearst Press that he is going to take a voyage to America to heroically combat it, had to admit in the Imperial and International conferences that India was not yet a Dominion though she was on the road to it. India continues to be in theory as well as in fact a Dependency of Great Britain. Two factors made it imperative on Britain not to openly avow this position. In the first place it was shocking to the self-respect of the people of this country in the wake of their intense after-war national consciousness which had to be placated.

FROM PAGE ONE

Act against communal hate, SC tells two States

The court further recorded the statements of the Uttarakhand counsel that the State authorities were "more than confident" that no untoward statements would be made in the Roorkee event. The court directed the Uttarakhand Chief Secretary to file a report stating the corrective measures which were taken before the next date of hearing on May 9.

The court referred to how hate speeches continue to hold sway with impunity despite its 2017 judgment in Tehseen Poonawalla case.

'Zero tolerance'

In this verdict, the court had called for zero tolerance on the part of the Centre and States for hate crimes. It had termed hate crimes as a "product of intolerance, ideological dominance and prejudice".

"It is our constitutional duty to take a call to protect lives and human rights. There cannot be a right higher than the right to live with dignity and further to be treated with humanness that the law provides," the Court had emphasised.

Among other steps, the Supreme Court had directed State governments to form special task forces to prevent hate crimes and "procure intelligence reports about the people who are likely to commit such crimes or who are involved in spreading hate speeches, provocative statements and fake news".

Any failure in the part of the authorities would be viewed as an "act of deliberate negligence and/or misconduct".

The court had reiterated its position against hate crimes in another judgment in the Amish Devgan case in December 2020, holding that hate speech was an attack on dignity in the "matter of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship" and threatened the unity of the nation as a whole.

"The unity and integrity of the nation cannot be overlooked and slighted, as the acts that promote or are likely to promote divisiveness, alienation and schematism do directly and indirectly impinge on the diversity and pluralism, and when they are with the objective and intent to cause public disorder or to demean dignity of the targeted groups, they have to be dealt with as per law," the Supreme Court had observed.

More COVID jabs for children get nod

Last week, the SEC reviewed the application of both the companies seeking emergency use authorisation. Covaxin was granted Emergency Use Listing (EUL) by the DCGI for the age group of 12 to 18 on December 24, 2021.

India began inoculating children aged 12-14 on March 16.

India rolled out its countrywide vaccination drive on January 16 last year, with healthcare workers getting inoculated in the first phase. Vaccination of frontline workers started from February 2 last year. The next phase of vaccination commenced on March 1 last year for people over 60 years and those aged 45 and above with specific comorbid conditions.

India launched vaccination of all people aged more than 45 from April 1 last year. The government then decided to expand its vaccination drive by allowing everyone above 18 to be inoculated against the viral disease from May 1 last year.

Meanwhile, PM Modi is scheduled to hold a meeting with CMs on the emerging situation on Wednesday.

'There will be no winner in Ukraine war'

Jaishankar reminds the West that there are equally serious challenges in the Indo-Pacific region

DINAKAR PERI
KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

No one will emerge victorious from the war in Ukraine, said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Tuesday.

Addressing the annual Raisina Dialogue here, the senior Minister said the citizens of the world were getting affected by events such as the pandemic and violence, and reminded guests from western countries of several equally serious challenges in the Indo-Pacific region and that they should look beyond the crisis in Ukraine.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with his Norwegian counterpart Anniken Huitfeldt at a meeting in Delhi. • PTI

Rules based order

"There will be no winners out of this conflict. At this moment, this would occupy you with the exclusion of everything else. There are equally pressing issues in other parts of the world. I mentioned Afghanistan... the challenges we faced in Asia," Dr. Jaishankar said. He cited that the "rules-based international order" was violated in the Indo-Pacific region in the recent past, but the western decision-makers did not pay sufficient attention to addressing the causes of such breakdowns.

A day earlier, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had also connected the Ukrainian crisis with the Indo-Pacific region, saying the war in Europe had begun to impact the region. Her premise was based on the emerging partnership between Russia and China that she described as an "unrestrained pact". During the second day of the annual event, several speakers including former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott echoed Ms. Von der Leyen's opinion on China's role in the emerging world order, and said that following the Russian military campaign on Ukraine, China may be tempted to launch an operation to take Taiwan.

India has maintained communication with both sides of the war and urged for "immediate cessation of violence". The policy has drawn some criticism including from U.S. President Joe Biden, who described it as "shaky".

Mr. Jaishankar took on the critics of India's neutral status on the Ukraine crisis, saying, "When rules-based order was under challenge in Asia, the advice we got from Europe is 'do more trade'. At least we are not giving you that advice". Further, he said the people of Afghanistan were abandoned without any concern about their future.

"In terms of Afghanistan, please show me which part of the rules-based international order justified what the world did there," said Mr. Jaishankar who urged the western decision makers to look beyond their immediate continental problems. "I recognise today that the conflict in Ukraine is one among the dominant issues, not just in terms of principles and values alone, but also for knock-on effects. People in Asia and Africa are saying the conflict is playing out in terms of higher energy prices, food inflation, disruption of various kinds," he said.

He urged for the beginning of serious negotiations.

Wrong to say half of working age cohort dropped out: govt.

'Many are pursuing education or doing unpaid activities'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Responding to a recent report of the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), the Union Labour and Employment Ministry on Tuesday said it was "factually incorrect" to infer that half the working age population had dropped out of the labour force. A large proportion of the cohort was pursuing education or engaged in unpaid activities such as care-giving, it said.

"Employment is the primary concern of the Government of India and various steps are being taken by Ministries/departments for generation of employment opportunities in the country...It is important to note that the complete working age population may not be working or seeking work. A substantial portion of working age population is either pursuing education...or engaged in unpaid activities like production of goods for own consumption, unpaid domestic activities or caregiving services for household members, volunteering, training, etc.," the Ministry said in a statement.

'Not looking for jobs'

The statement said, according to the Education Ministry, more than 10 crore people were enrolled in secondary, higher secondary, higher or technical education in 2019-20 and 49% of that was women.

"Majority of these students pursuing higher education are in the working age population but, all of them may not be seeking work. Similarly, not all females engaged in unpaid domestic services for household members may be seeking paid work," the Ministry said in the statement.

It added that the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's Periodic Labour Force Survey had shown an increase in the labour force participation rate, which is the percentage of population either working or seeking work, from 49.8% in 2017-18 to 53.5% in 2019-20 and a decrease of unemployment rate from 6% to 4.8%.

According to a Labour Ministry official, the CMIE report, which showed a decline in the labour force participation rate from 46% to 40%, did not prepare a frame of households of sample village/block for the survey.

SC to hear two petitions on sedition law today

CJI questioned need for colonial law

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has listed for Wednesday two petitions challenging the constitutionality of the sedition law.

The petitions, one by Major General S.G. Vombatkere (retd) and the other by the Editors Guild of India, have been listed for hearing before a three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana. The other judges are Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli.

Last year, the CJI voiced what could be an unprecedented judicial criticism of the way sedition was used by the government to crush liberties. He had questioned why a colonial law used against Mahatma Gandhi and Bal Gangadhar Tilak continued to survive in the law book after 75 years of Independence.

"Sedition is a colonial law. Is this law necessary after 75 years of Independence?" Chief Justice Ramana, had orally addressed Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal and Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre.

Chief Justice Ramana had said sedition or Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code was prone to misuse by the government.

The CJI's oral statement in open court marks a significant note amid rising public denouncement of law enforcement agencies using the sedition law to silence dissent, muffle free expression and deny bail to activists, journalists, students and civil society members. A number of petitions have been filed highlighting the "chilling effect" sedition has on the fundamental right of free speech.

IN BRIEF

HC dismisses Navlakha's plea on house arrest

MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday dismissed a plea by activist and journalist Gautam Navlakha, an accused in the Bhima Koregaon caste violence case, seeking his transfer to house arrest from the Taloja Central Jail. He is seeking house arrest on the grounds of ill-health and "poor sanitation conditions" in the jail. He has been lodged in the 'anda' cell, where he is allowed a walk in the open space for half an hour and has to clean it.

Commission submits report on Anil Deshmukh

MUMBAI

The Justice K.U. Chandiwal Commission, which was appointed to look into allegations against former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, submitted a 201-page report to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Tuesday. The commission examined Mr. Deshmukh, NCP leader Nawab Malik, former police commissioner of Mumbai Param Bir Singh, suspended police officer Sachin Vaze and other police officers. It was set up to inquire the corruption allegations levelled by Mr. Singh against the former Home Minister.

Militants attack CRPF bus in south Kashmir

SRINAGAR

Militants carried out a grenade attack and made an abortive bid to snatch a rifle from an on-duty CRPF personnel by spraying pepper powder, in two separate incidents in south Kashmir on Tuesday. An official said the CRPF jawan manning a gate in Anantnag was attacked with pepper powder. "The gun snatching bid was foiled with the help of CRPF jawans and policemen present there," the official said. Militants also attacked a CRPF vehicle with a grenade at Barzloo area in Kulgam. Personnel from the CRPF's 18 Battalion were inside the bus when the grenade was hurled at it. No casualties were reported.

Police shoot at accused in murder case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

A man who allegedly murdered a 22-year-old woman and her parents with a sharp-edged weapon after she rejected his advances was shot and wounded by the police a day later at Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, officials said on Tuesday.

The accused attacked the girl and her parents with a spade in Raiganj village in Khorabar area of the district on Monday, the police said. On Tuesday, Senior Superintendent of Police Gorakhpur Vipin Yadav said the triple-murder accused was arrested but he tried to escape from police custody.

"He snatched a police weapon and fired at the police. He was shot in retaliatory firing," said Mr. Tada. The accused is under the observation of doctors.

Will list Hijab plea in two days: SC

Karnataka High Court had held that it was not an essential practice in Islam

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Tuesday asked students who have been denied access to their classrooms for choosing to wear hijab to wait for two days for their appeals to come up in the Supreme Court.

"Please wait for two days... I will list," Chief Justice Ramana assured senior advocate Meenakshi Arora, who made an oral mentioning for early hearing of the case on behalf of the students.

Students have approached the Supreme Court against a Karnataka High Court judgment which had held that wearing hijab was not an essential religious practice in Islam.

One of them, Niba Naaz, countered the High Court's conclusion by arguing that the "Indian legal system explicitly recognises the wearing/carrying of religious symbols... Motor Vehicles Act exempts turban-wearing Sikhs from wearing a helmet... Sikhs are allowed to carry *kirpans* into an aircraft".

Denying access

She argued that denying Muslim girls like her access to education, and thus, punishing them for wearing hijab to college was a violation of their right to privacy.

"Freedom of conscience forms a part of the right to privacy," her petition said. Any infringement of her right to privacy should be on the basis of a valid law, for a legitimate state interest and the law must be proportionate. No law prohibited hijab, the petitioner said.

Ms. Naaz argued that the High Court judgment had created a "dichotomy of freedom of religion and freedom of conscience".

"This freedom would include the freedom to lawfully express one's identity in the manner of their liking." The student said she and several others like her had approached the Karnataka High Court, expecting it to protect her fundamental rights and quash a State government order of February 5 directing college development committees to prescribe uniforms for them.

She termed the State government's order a "ridiculing attack" on Muslim students wearing hijab, under the "guise of attaining secularity and equality on the basis of uniform".

Not mandatory

She said the State could not prescribe uniforms for students. It was for educational institutions to do so. Further, Karnataka Educational Institutions Rules of 1995 did not make it mandatory for a school or institution to prescribe a uniform.

In their case, no uniform had been prescribed by their respective institutions. Ms. Naaz said the law did not require a student to be punished for not wearing a particular uniform.

The act of denying students like her access to classrooms was illegal.

Jignesh Mevani sent to 5-day police custody in Assam

Court rejects bail plea in sexual assault of police officer case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

A court in Barpeta in western Assam's rejected independent Gujarat MLA and Dalit activist Jignesh Mevani's bail petition and sent him to five days' police custody on Tuesday.

Mr. Mevani was re-arrested on Monday on charges of "assaulting and outraging the modesty of a woman police officer" soon after another court in Kokrajhar, about 85 km west of Barpeta, granted him bail in a case related to an "offensive" tweet against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Barpeta police had sought 12 days' custody of Mr. Mevani, but the court, while rejecting his bail petition, gave them five days.

Mr. Mevani was first arrested by the Assam police from Palanpur in Gujarat on April 20 based on an FIR lodged by Arup Kumar Dey, a BJP executive member in the autonomous Bodoland Territorial Council for the controversial tweet.

Jignesh Mevani

He had allegedly molested the woman police officer on April 21 while being escorted from the Guwahati airport to Kokrajhar.

According to his lawyer, Angshuman Bora, the police did not mention this case while challenging his bail petition in the tweet-related case on Sunday.

While the court was hearing the case on Tuesday, some Assam Congress leaders demanding Mr. Mevani's release were briefly detained by the Barpeta police. Congress MP Abdul Khaleque slammed the BJP for "stifling freedom of speech".

Congress Legislature Party leader Debabrata Saikia said, "We fear more cases will be filed against him. We have seen it happening with [activist-turned-politician] Akhil Gogoi. People were arrested in the past and harassed."

'India's unique syncretic social fabric at risk'

Ex-bureaucrats write to PM, calling for action

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A group of over 100 retired bureaucrats on Tuesday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to call for an end to "politics of hate". They said his "silence, in the face of this enormous societal threat, is deafening".

In an open letter to Mr. Modi, 108 signatories under the Constitutional Conduct Group highlighted the recent spate of communal tension and actions by the BJP-ruled States against Muslims and other minorities.

The letter stated that violence against minorities, particularly Muslims, in the last few months and years in many BJP-ruled States had become more frightening.

State fully complicit

"What is alarming now is the subordination of the fundamental principles of our Constitution and of the rule of law to the forces of majoritarianism, in which the state appears to be fully complicit. The hate and malevolence directed against Muslims seems to have embedded itself deep in the recesses of the structures, institutions and processes of governance in the States in which the BJP is in power," the letter noted.

The ex-bureaucrats said the threat facing India today was unprecedented and not only was constitutional morality and conduct at risk but "the unique syncretic social fabric" was likely to be torn apart.

"We appeal to your conscience, taking heart from your promise of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas [everyone together, everyone's development, everyone's trust]. It is our fond hope that in this year of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', rising above partisan considerations, you will call for an end to the politics of hate that governments under your party's control are so assiduously practising. The idea of India that our founding fathers had envisioned and fought for needs a climate of fraternity and communal harmony to thrive. Hate will engender hate, rendering the environment too noxious for the idea to survive," they wrote.

Among the signatories were senior retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Forest Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) officers, including former Foreign Secretaries Shivshankar Menon and Sujatha Singh and former Home Secretary G.K. Pillai.

Webinar on healthy ageing today

It is being held as part of World Immunisation Week

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

As a part of World Immunisation Week which is observed from April 24 to 30, a webinar on 'Adult immunisation; Healthy Ageing Matters' will be held by GSK Pharma along with *The Hindu* on April 27.

Subramanian Swaminathan, Consultant Infectious Disease, Global Hospital, Chennai and Sitesh Roy, Senior Consultant Allergist, Immunologist and Asthma Specialist, will be the panellist for the webinar.

The discussion will be moderated by Pankaja Srinivasan, freelance writer.

World Immunisation Week, aims to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against diseases. Immunisation saves millions of lives every year and is widely recognised as one of the world's most successful health interventions.

However, there are still many who are not getting the vaccines they need, and many miss out on vital vaccines during adolescence, adulthood and into old age.

The webinar will be held from 3.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

For further details and to register, log onto bit.ly/3LuJaVm or scan the QR code given.

CPI(M) flays Trinamool over SIT report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

CPI(M) State secretary Mohammed Salim said on Tuesday that the Trinamool Congress government in West Bengal is trying to say through the Special Investigation Team's (SIT) "investigation report" that no one killed Anish Khan.

He said that from the very start, the Trinamool government was trying to reach the conclusion that Anish Khan was not killed and this probe was just an attempt to divert attention.

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

'India needs a plan so that we are not vulnerable to the splinternet'

We have to ensure that we cannot be unplugged; intermediaries will have to play by the rules and laws of India, says Minister of State for Electronics and IT

NISTULA HEBBAR
YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

Hours after billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk's takeover of social media platform Twitter, Minister of State for Electronics and IT **Rajeev Chandrasekhar** *spoke on the need for a legislative overhaul of the 22-year-old IT Act, stressing the need to ensure that India is not vulnerable to weaponisation of the Internet.*

Elon Musk has just bought social media site Twitter. Do you have a view on it?

■ Our view towards intermediaries has always been the same: that all intermediaries, big or small, have to comply with our expectations of openness, safety and trust and accountability. That is why we have the law and the rules; it doesn't matter who owns what, we have a standard set of expectations and we keep to it.

Are you happy with the IT rules and what has been achieved so far? Do we need more tightening?

■ The relationship between intermediaries and consumers was bereft of any framework and the rules established some accountability. Is it fully optimised? Do we need a legislative overhaul? Yes, we do. It is common sense that if you are in 2022 and operating on a law enacted in 2000, you need a relook since 22 years is a long time in Internet history. I think we will continue to see progress in the way we evolve the framework under which everybody on the Internet can expect openness, and consumers, especially women and children, can expect safety and trust and accountability. Those are the basis of the thinking, not just in India but across the world.

The role and influence of Big Tech has been brought into sharp relief by the conflict between Ukraine and Russia. How do you think we should react to this?

■ We are going to have a trillion dollar digital economy in a few years, and a large number of businesses will be on the Indian Internet, so the Internet becomes an important economic component of our country. So if anybody has the power to unplug the Internet, it's not a good thing.

It doesn't matter who owns what, we have a standard set of expectations and we keep to it

We don't like the idea that any country should be, could be, must be, can be, vulnerable to that kind of conduct – politically directed conduct, for any blackmail-directed conduct.

What can we do? We have to ensure that we cannot be unplugged; intermediaries will have to play by the rules and laws of India. The weaponisation of the Internet, or "splinternet", is something we need to plan not being vulnerable to. It is an objective for us.

How is that to be achieved?

■ There are many things happening and they are complex things, nothing is easy. Increasingly bilateral or multilateral arrangements between countries will have to evolve in a way that nothing can be done in isolation from other countries. A conversation has already started on these issues, on issues that technology intermediaries cannot be left unregulated, also to dispel the belief that the Internet has no boundaries, that no law of any land will be able to reach those who commit crimes in another jurisdiction whereas the victim is in another jurisdiction.

What do you have to say about the relationship between intermediaries and the government – there have been frictions in the past.

Our view is very clear, Article 19(2) carves out the exceptions to freedom of speech. In cyberspace, there is jurisprudence that will move beyond 19(2) because there is also user harm. As long as it meets a certain test, that content will be taken down or the individual de-platformed. What is the test of the law that that person fails? Currently, under certain Sections, the government has the right to take down content, and as long as the process is transparent, it is a right that is there with every sovereign government.

A new cybersecurity policy was supposed to be out...

■ There is clearly a need for an overall framework of laws and policies and rules. Should we move to a model where you have a new legislative framework, with the new rule-making capability that deals with all related issues in a modern, contemporary way and they are all harmonised with each other. For example, cybersecurity sits in a silo, it will be in a silo of user harm. Nothing will be done in this Ministry without public consultation. I cannot give a timeline, but the concept note and what we propose will be out as early as May.

There has been a lot of talk on verification of accounts? What is your view?

■ We don't believe verification of accounts solves anything. We already have the rules for identification of the first originator, which is in litigation, but we are clear on our position. That position is sound in law. I said in Parliament that we do not believe in verification because verification means I know who you are and that will curb your free speech. You cannot say many things if I know who you are. As a government, we don't want to restrict right to free speech and therefore, you can be anonymous. However, having given you that, if there is a crime, you cannot then say that we will not allow the clauses dealing with identification of first originator.

Cong. to remove Jakhar, Thomas from party posts

Sonia approves panel recommendation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee (PPCC) chief Sunil Jakhar and Kerala leader K.V. Thomas will remain in the Congress, but they will not hold any party positions. The Congress Disciplinary Committee made these recommendations to party chief Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday.

"Our recommendations have been approved by Congress president Sonia Gandhiji. Both of them will remain in the party but will not have any official position," Tariq Anwar, a member of the disciplinary panel, told *The Hindu*.

The five-member committee, chaired by party veteran A.K. Antony, met to discuss complaints against Mr. Jakhar, Mr. Thomas and five party MLAs in Meghalaya who extended support to the National People's Party-led government in the State in which the BJP is an ally.

Mr. Jakhar had criticised former Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi, terming him a liability after the Congress lost the Punjab Assembly election.

Sunil Jakhar

Accusing Mr. Jakhar of using objectionable language against Mr. Channi and the Scheduled Caste community during a TV interview, some leaders, including former Minister Raj Kumar Verka, had also demanded action.

In the case of Mr. Thomas, he had defied the Kerala unit's directions and attended a seminar organised by the CPI(M) on April 9. This prompted the State leaders to seek action against him.

Kishor declines offer to join Congress

Party needs leadership and collective will to fix deep-rooted structural problems, poll strategist says

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

Election strategist Prashant Kishor has declined the offer by Congress president Sonia Gandhi to join the party as part of the Empowered Action Group (EAG) for the 2024 Lok Sabha election, the Congress announced on Twitter on Tuesday.

The announcement came a day after the Congress chief announced the setting up of the EAG to deal with the political challenges in the run-up to the next Lok Sabha election.

Moments later, Mr. Kishor tweeted to say that he had declined to take responsibility for elections, and said the "party needs leadership and collective will to fix the deep-rooted structural problems through transformational reforms".

Though neither side publicly put out the reasons for the breakdown, Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala's tweet that the invitation to Mr. Kishor to join the party with "defined responsibility" was suggestive. On Monday, *The Hindu* had reported that there was resentment among senior leaders about his association with other regional players and wanted Ms. Gandhi to define his "exact role and limits". On the other hand, sources close to Mr. Kishor said he had made it clear that he would join the party only if he was given a "free hand" to implement his plans.

Talk time: Former Punjab Congress president Navjot Singh Sidhu with election strategist Prashant Kishor. • PTI

"I declined the generous offer of #Congress to join the party as part of the EAG & take responsibility for the elections. In my humble opinion, more than me, the party needs leadership and collective will to fix the deep-rooted structural problems through transformational reforms," Mr. Kishor tweeted.

The very public negotiations between the Congress party and the poll strategist that went on for months fell through just days after Mr. Kishor's firm, Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC), signed up with the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) on Sunday to manage the party's campaign for the Assembly election.

While the Telangana unit of the Congress, the principal Opposition in the State, was vocal in its protest, several senior leaders wanted clarity on Mr. Kishor's association with I-PAC and other regional players. "Following a presentation & discussions with Sh. Prashant Kishor, Congress president has constituted an Empowered Action Group 2024 & invited him to join the party as part of the group with defined responsibility. He declined. We appreciate his efforts & suggestion given to party," Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala tweeted on Tuesday.

Detailed presentation

Over the past 10 days, the poll strategist had made several detailed presentations on reviving the Congress at Ms. Gandhi's residence that were attended by senior leaders. Following these presentations, the Congress had set up an eight-member panel to examine these problems. While a majority of the committee members agreed that several points in the revival plan were implementable, the panel was divided on Mr. Kishor being given a key position.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Ambika Soni were said to be in favour of a key role, while veteran leaders Digvijaya Singh, Jairam Ramesh, K.C. Venugopal, Mukul Wasnik and Randeep Surjewala were among those who had reservations. The latter did not want the creation of any new architecture and structure outside the party Constitution, said a source.

The poll strategist's equation with the Congress has seen several flip-flops over the past year – from reports that he would join the party on October 2 last year to being blamed for engineering the switchover of senior leaders like Mukul Sangma (Meghalaya) and Luizinho Faleiro (Goa) to the Trinamool Congress, with whom Mr. Kishor has been working for a couple of years.

And the twist in the tale came in a tweet from former Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu. Hours after the public parting of ways with the Congress, Mr. Sidhu shared a selfie with Mr. Kishor, saying: "Had a wonderful meeting with my old friend PK ... Old wine , Old gold and Old friends still the best !!!".

Home Ministry seeks report on MP's claim

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has sought a factual report from the Maharashtra government after Independent Lok Sabha member Navneet Rana alleged in a letter to Speaker Om Birla that she was discriminated against and not provided water at the Khar police station in Mumbai as she belonged to a Scheduled Caste.

The Amaravati MP was arrested on April 23 along with her MLA husband, Ravi Rana, for giving a call to recite the Hanuman Chalisa outside Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's private residence 'Matoshree' in Mumbai.

On Tuesday, Mumbai police Commissioner Sanjay Pandey released a 12-second video grab on Twitter, reportedly of the police station where the Rana couple are seen sitting and sipping a hot beverage. "Do we say anything more," Mr. Pandey said while sharing the video clip.

JD(U), BJP lock horns over Civil Code

AMARNATH TEWARY
PATNA

Senior BJP leader and Rajya Sabha member Sushil Kumar Modi recently hailed the announcement made by Union Home Minister Amit Shah about the plans to implement Uniform Civil Code in BJP-ruled States. BJP MLAs in Bihar too voiced support for the move.

However, JD(U) leaders have questioned the "need of it in the State where people have been living peacefully". This is yet another instance of the deepening chasm between the ruling allies in the State.

"The Constitution of the country has given equal rights to all, so everyone should be equal. It is a good thing to have one law for all," said Jibesh Kumar Mishra, BJP legislator and Minister in Nitish Kumar's Cabinet. Similarly, Revenue Minister and BJP MLA Ram Surat Rai said, "Wherever there is BJP government, UCC should be implemented. This is in the interest of the country and we also urge the Chief Minister to implement it."

However, JD(U) parliamentary board chairman Upendra Kushwaha said, "Everything is going well under the leadership of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. Why will the Uniform Civil Code be implemented here as the people of Bihar are living peacefully!" "I don't think there is any need of it." Other JD(U) leaders too echoed the sentiment.

कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियंता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, संभाग- बीकानेर
DIPR/C/5652/2022) निविदा निरस्त बाबत
विषय- सूचना संख्या 01/ 2022-23 निविदा को निरस्त कराने बाबत
इस कार्यालय के पत्रांक 28 दिनांक 11.04.2022 द्वारा जारी किए गए सूचना संख्या 01/ 2022-23 को अपरिहार्य कारणों से निरस्त कर पुनः इस कार्यालय की निविदा संख्या: 02/ 2022-23 आवंटित कर दी गई है।
UBN NO.

PWD2223WLOB00380	PWD2223WLOB00381	PWD2223WLOB00382
PWD2223WLOB00383	PWD2223WLOB00384	PWD2223WLOB00385
PWD2223WLOB00386	PWD2223WLOB00387	PWD2223WLOB00388
PWD2223WLOB00389	PWD2223WLOB00390	

(सुवीर माथुर)
DIPR/C/6918/2022 अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियंता, सार्वजनिक, संभाग- बीकानेर

Employees' State Insurance Corporation Hospital, Peenya
(Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India)
Sy. No. 11-55-1, Plot No. 1, 5th Main Road (FTI Campus), Yeshwanthapur, Bengaluru - 560 022
Phone: 080-23723468, E-mail: mspeenya.ka@esic.nic.in
WALK-IN-INTERVIEW
FOR ENGAGEMENT OF SENIOR RESIDENT (ON CONTRACT)
ESIC HOSPITAL, PEENYA, BENGALURU
Walk-in-Interview for the post of Senior Resident (on contract) will be held on 10.05.2022 and on Second Wednesday of August, December 2022. The details of vacant posts will be published 05 days prior to the date of interview in our official website: www.esic.nic.in
Sd/-
Medical Superintendent

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
LUMPSUM CONTRACT (TWO COVER SYSTEM)
Tender Notice, NIT.No : 2 SE/Spl.Project Circle, Palani/2022- 2023/Dt:26.04.2022
For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, sealed tenders are invited from the Registered Contractors of PWD/WRD for the following work by the undersigned up to 3.00 PM on 01.06.2022. The Prequalification application alone will be opened at 3.30 PM on the same day.

Sl No.	Name of work	EMD Rs.	Cost of Tender schedule +GST in Rs	Period of Completion (Including rainy season)	Cost of Schedule and EMD to be remitted in favour of
1	Construction of Check dam across Amaravathy river at LS 93.00Km near Kavundalyanvalasu village of Dharapuram taluk of Tiruppur District. Approximate Value of work including GST Rs.1030.00 Lakhs	5,25,000	Rs. 15000 + GST	12 Months	The Executive Engineer, WRD., Amaravathy Basin Division,Dharapuram, Tiruppur District

1. Last date of receipt of requisition for tender documents 31.05.2022 up to 5.45 P.M
2. Details of tender schedule and conditions are available in the website at free of cost http:www.tenders.tn.gov.in
DIPR/ 2003 /TENDER/2022
Superintending Engineer, WRD., Special Project Circle, Palani.

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF, JICA
ORISSA WATER SUPPLY & SEWERAGE BOARD
At: Mahanadivihar, P.O: Nayabazar, Cuttack- 753004
Ph: 0671-2444511, e-mail: ce_ jica@owssb.in
Bid Identification No.01/OISIP,JICA/OWSSB dt. 25.04.2022
Name of the work : Construction for the Household Sewer Connections to the Sewerage System for Package-1 to 12 in different zones of Cuttack City.

Description	Critical Dates
Availability of tenders online	28.04.2022 (11 AM) to 19.05.2022 (5.00 PM)
Pre-Bid Meeting	09.05.2022 (12:30 PM)
Last date & time of bidding Submission (Online)	19.05.2022 (5.00 PM)
Date & time of Opening of Technical Bid	20.05.2022 (12.30 PM)

The details of the tender will be available in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Sd/- Engineer-in-Chief
OISIP, JICA, OWSSB, Cuttack
CAD-316 OIPR-32431/11/0004/2223

RAJASTHAN URJA VIKAS NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Rajasthan Undertaking)
Corporate Identity Number (CIN) - U40109RJ2015SGC048738
Regd. Office : Vidyut Bhawan, Janpath, Jyoti Nagar, Jaipur-302005
Work Office at: Shed No. 5/4, Vidyut Bhawan, Janpath, Jaipur- 302005
E-mail: SE.PRUVNL@RAJASTHAN.GOV.IN, Website: www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/ruvnl
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Online bids are invited to procure 600 MW RTC power from 01st May 2022 to 31st May 2022 on short term basis from various Generators/ State Utilities / CPPs / Distribution Licensees / SEBs/ Trading Licensees as per specification under TN-10/RUVNL/FY 2022-23. May visit website www.mstcecommerce.com / www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/ruvnl for further details.
Raj.samvad/C/22/3058 RUVN/99-23 (2022) (HV) Superintending Engineer

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice
Tender No.: 4/2022-23/PHC/KNR
Jal Jeevan Mission-Kannur District-Eramam Kuttur Grama Panchayath-Construction of intake well cum pump house, 4.00 MLD WTP, 4.50m high RCC weir, supply and erection of pumpsets, construction of service reservoirs and laying pumping main, transmission main, distribution system and providing FHTCs. EMD: ₹5,00,000
Tender fee: ₹17,700. Last date for submitting tender: 23-05-2022 02:00 pm
Phone: 0497 2705902
Website: www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in
KWA-JB-GL-6-107-2022-23 Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Kannur

ODISHA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
Regd. Office: Janpath, Bhubaneswar-751022
CIN:U40102OR2004SGC007553
TENDER ALERT
1) E-Tender Notice No.CPC-60/2021-22: Engineering, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 01X80 MVAR, 420 kV Bus Reactor along with 400kV Bay extension (GIS) & other associated system at 400/220kV GIS Grid S/S, Meramundali-B at an Estimated Cost of the package for Rs.23.40 Crore on Turnkey Contract Basis.
Complete set of bidding documents are available on www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL portal and OPTCL's official website: www.optcl.co.in.
Sd/-
SGM(CPC)
HIPR-03/2022-23 OIPR-04011/11/0013/2223
CAD-317

कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता,
सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, संभाग प्रथम जोधपुर
क्रमांक: 1112 दिनांक: 21.04.2022
निविदा सूचना संख्या: 4 वर्ष 2022-2023
NIB No. PWD2223A0223
राजस्थान के राजकीय भवनों की ओर से विभिन्न सक्षम निर्माण कार्यों हेतु उपयुक्त क्रेणी में सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग राजस्थान में पंजीकृत फर्मों एवं राज्य सरकार / केन्द्र सरकार के उपक्रम संस्थानें / केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग / एन. एच.ए.आई. तथा संबंधित विभाग / रेलवे इत्यादि में पंजीकृत फर्मों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के उपयुक्त श्रेणी के फर्मों के समकक्ष हैं, से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में कुल 03 कार्यों जिनकी लागत राशि रु. 6954.00 लाख है के लिये ई-टेन्डरिंग प्रक्रिया हेतु ऑनलाईन निविदाऐं आमंत्रित की जाती है।

ऑनलाईन निविदा अपलोड एवं अपलोड करने की तारीख	29 अप्रेल 2022, 9.30 बजे से 19 मई 2022 सायं 06.00 बजे तक

निविदा से सम्बन्धित विवरण वेबसाईट http://dipr.rajasthan.gov.in से http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in से http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है। सम्पूर्ण निविदा प्रक्रिया http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर ऑनलाईन सम्पादित की जायेगी। इच्छुक फर्मों को अपने डिजिटल हस्ताक्षर के साथ ये वेबसाईट पर http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर रजिस्टर्ड करवाना आवश्यक है। कार्यालय दू.भा. एवं संपर्क निम्नानुसार है।

1. PWD2223WLOB00799	2. PWD2223WLOB00805	3. PWD2223WLOB00807

DIPR/C/5941/2022 (देवीलाल आई), अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता, स.नि.वि. संभाग प्रथम, जोधपुर

भारतीय समुद्री विश्वविद्यालय
INDIAN MARITIME UNIVERSITY
(A Central University Under Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India)
Established by an Act of Parliament in 2008
Advt. No. IMU-HQ/R/13/15/5/2021-Estt. (R) Vol II Date: 27.04.2022
Advertisement for Recruitment of Campus Directors (on Direct Recruitment/Deputation)
Applications are invited for the posts of Campus Director of Visakhapatnam, Kochi and Kolkata.

Name of the Post	Category	Total No. of Posts	Pay Level
Campus Director	OBC-(NCL)-1 EWS-1 UR-1	3	Level-14 [Academic] under 7th CPC plus Special Allowance of Rs.6750/-per month. Other benefits and allowances are as per IMU rules.

For further details regarding eligibility criteria: Age, Educational Qualifications, Experience, etc., please visit www.imu.edu.in.
Important dates:
Opening date for submission of online application: 27.04.2022
Closing date for submission of online application: 10.06.2022
REGISTRAR

OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR AND DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, KHORDHA
(SOCIAL SECURITY SECTION)
Email:dssokhurda1@gmail.com
No.1704 /SS, Dt. 22/04/2022
Sealed Tenders are invited from the intending registered Manpower Service Provider Agencies to provide services of Manpower (As Programme Assistants) on contract basis to implement various MIS works of Social Security Section at District Office and in different Sub-Division/Block/ ULB Offices of Khordha District under SSEPD Department for a period of one year with effect from the date of execution of the agreement on contract. The tender documents for the above purpose containing the terms and conditions, EMD and statutory requirement is available in website www.khordha.nic.in . The advertisement for the said purpose also be published in the Local Newspaper " The Sambad" & "The Hindu". The tender complete in all respect should reach the Office of the District Social Security Officer, Khordha by 1.00 P.M. on dated.06.05.22 through Regd. Post/Speed Post only and the tenders will be opened on dated 07.05.22 at 10.30 A.M. in the Conference Hall of Collectorate, Khordha in presence of the Tender Committee members and the tenderer or their authorized representatives. The tender received beyond the date and time mentioned above shall not be taken into consideration. The Collector, Khordha reserves the right to reject/ cancel/ withdraw/ annul any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof and shall bear no liability what so ever consequent upon such decision.
Collector & District Magistrate, Khordha.
gg-04: OIPR-24013/11/0002/2223

Over 13,000 distress calls during first lockdown

More than 11,000 of them were for food, shelter; 41,000 camps, shelters housed 14 lakh people, says Home Ministry report

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

In the first year of the pandemic-induced lockdown, helplines run by the Union Home Ministry received over 13,000 distress calls, and 11,000 of them were for food and shelter, says the Ministry's annual report for 2020-21.

The report said that nearly 41,000 relief camps and shelters were set up and over 14 lakh people were housed there.

The Ministry said the nationwide lockdown was announced considering the "global experience" and the need for consistency in the approach and implementation of various measures across the country, including enhancing capacities of testing, quarantine, isolation and hospital beds and ICU beds.

It said that "prior to the declaration of national lockdown with effect from 25.03.2020, most of the States/Union Territories had already declared lockdown [fully and partially] in their respective areas based upon their assessment of the situation".

Social distancing

The report said the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), headed by the Prime Minister, after assessing the threatening situation of spreading of COVID-19 in the country, directed the National Executive Committee (NEC) to issue necessary guidelines to the Ministries/departments of Government of India, State governments and State authorities to take measures for ensuring social distancing.

In compliance with the NDMA's order, the Home Secretary, in his capacity as Chairperson of the NEC, issued an order on March 24, 2020 under Section 10 (2) (l) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 to implement lockdown measures in the country.

The first complete lockdown for a 21-day period was announced on March 24, 2020, leaving thousands of migrant workers and students stranded in various parts of the country. Thousands of migrants walked to their homes from Delhi, Mumbai and other major cities as all modes of public transport were suspended. In the wake of the crisis, the Home Ministry started three control rooms to monitor the complaints received from States and to resolve the problems of the migrants.

Long march: Thousands of migrant workers walked to their villages from cities during the lockdown. • FILE PHOTO

The annual report said that from March 21, control room operations were expanded by making them operational 24 hours.

"The number of helplines was increased from 7 to 66, of which 15 were dedicated to the people of the north-eastern region. Control rooms attended to the queries of States/ Union Territories and other Ministries on lockdown measures, addressed inter-Ministries and inter-State coordination issues etc.," it said.

It added that from March 25, 2020 to December 31, 2020 "the MHA control room handled a total of 13,034 calls [excluding calls for movement of Shramik Special Trains] out of which 854 calls were related to essential goods and services, 11,377 calls were for food and shelter, 129 calls were for the north-eastern region and 742 calls were for other issues".

Unlocking phase

The control room was getting around 600 calls daily in the initial days of the lockdown but gradually the numbers came down when the unlock phase started after the fourth lockdown in May 2020.

Several days after the first lockdown, the Railways started running Shramik Special trains amid desperate pleas by the State governments and migrant workers.

The report said that from May 2-December 31 the same year, a total of 32,986 calls were received for movement by Shramik Special trains for 2,95,327 stranded persons, out of which 2,71,219 were for labourers, 5,388 for students, 1,539 for tourists and 17,052 for others. In addition, 296 calls were received from persons who wanted to travel to India from abroad and 265 from persons who wanted to travel abroad from India, the report said.

The Ministry said that based on reports, the State governments were also requested to set up shelter camps nearby places where people had gathered or were moving in large numbers.

"Around 41,000 relief camps and shelters were set up in the country. More than 14 lakh people were housed there. Besides this, there were 30,000 food camps. Apart from it, around 17 lakh workers stayed with their employers or on industry campuses where they were being provided shelter and food," the Ministry said.

It added that in the wake of a sudden shortage of oxygen supplies during September 2020, the Minsitry also coordinated with respective State governments and Union Territories for ensuring adequate and uninterrupted supplies of medical oxygen in the country.

Efforts on to improve court infra, says CJI

Bench responds to plea on facilities

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A Supreme Court Bench led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Tuesday said efforts were under way to improve the infrastructure of courts across the country and the issue may come up for discussion in a conference of Chief Justices and Chief Ministers scheduled in the weekend.

The CJI, speaking for the Bench, said the Supreme Court had already collected statistics and submitted a report on the issue.

The court was hearing a petition filed by advocate M.L. Sharma about the lack of infrastructure and facilities for courts.

"I even went to Hyderabad where I found that courts are functioning in rented buildings," Mr. Sharma submitted.

The court said since the topic was up for discussion in the conference on Saturday, it did not want to issue notice now.

"Suppose we issue notice, things may get stalled. Let us first see what comes out of the conference on Saturday. We will wait for a week," the CJI addressed Mr. Sharma and deferred the case by a week.

Mr. Sharma conveyed his hope to see positive results during his lifetime.

"Don't worry, nothing will happen to you. You will live a 100 years, actively practice and serve society," Chief Justice Ramana told the lawyer.

Citizen-friendly services

The CJI has been vocal about his proposal to establish a 'National Judicial Infrastructure Corporation' to uniformly improve judicial facilities and improve access to justice.

He had said that an efficient "judicial infrastructure" actually meant providing equal and free access to justice through a "barrier-free and citizen-friendly environment".

HC orders audit of CCTV footage of Contai polls

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

The Calcutta High Court on Tuesday ordered the forensic audit of CCTV footage on the recently concluded Contai municipality polls in West Bengal.

The Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL), Delhi is expected to conduct the forensic audit and submit a report to the court in a sealed cover within six weeks.

The Bench also directed the State Election Commission to send the CCTV footage of the Contai municipal election to Delhi in 10 days.

"While sending the CCTV footage as above, the State Election Commission will duly mark the concerned polling booth number to which each footage relates to; the CFSL will carry out the forensic audit and ascertain if booth capturing, EVM tampering, forged voting, violence, etc. had taken place in the respective polling booths," the order stated.

On the draw

Central govt. and Netflix launch partnership with 2-minute films

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union government and Netflix kicked off a partnership, with the release of two-minute films on seven women change-makers, titled *Azadi ki Amrit Kahaniyan*, on Tuesday. They announced the production of more such shorts and a serial on the Freedom Struggle to celebrate 75 years of Independence.

At the launch event, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said Netflix would produce 25 short films on various topics under the government's *Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav* celebration. With Netflix's head of global television Bela Bajaria in attendance, Mr. Thakur asked the streaming service to produce 75 such films.

Protagonists of three of the short films – environmentalist Basanti Devi, Anshu Jamsenpa, the first woman to summit Mount Everest twice in five days, and India's first woman firefighter Harshini Kanhekar – were present during the event. The stories, narrated by actor Neena Gupta and produced by Netflix, would be shared on social media and broadcast on Doordarshan, Mr. Thakur said.

"This initiative aims to bring out inspiring stories of Indians and these stories shall motivate and empower more people to achieve their goals," he said.

Many parts of Mumbai face power outage

STAFF REPORTER
MUMBAI

Parts of Mumbai and the Mumbai Metropolitan Region faced a power outage up to an hour-and-a-half after 400-kV lines at the Kalwa Padgha grid tripped around 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday.

The fault in the grid caused outage in Chembur, Govandi, Dharavi, Chunabhatti, Mankhurd, adjoining areas of Thane, Kalyan, Ambernath and others.

The outage in the financial capital occurred at a time when Maharashtra is already facing a power deficit of 3,500 MW.

Meanwhile, Tata Power has said that load-shedding might be initiated in the metropolis.

ED conducts searches in ABG Shipyard case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday searched 26 premises linked to ABG Shipyard Ltd, which is accused of cheating 28 banks of ₹22,842 crore.

The searches were conducted in Mumbai, Pune, Surat and other places under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

The ED case is based on an FIR filed by the CBI in February. The preliminary inquiry conducted by it stated that huge amounts taken from banks may have been diverted within India and abroad through over 100 companies.

According to the CBI, ABG has taken large sums of money from a consortium of 28 banks, including ICICI Bank (₹7,089 crore), IDBI Bank (₹3,639 crore), State Bank of India (₹2,925 crore), Bank of Baroda (₹1,614 crore) and Punjab National Bank (₹1,244 crore).

The CBI and the ED have named ABG's former chairman and managing director Rishi Kamlesh Agarwal and other directors of the company in the case.

As per the CBI, a majority of disbursements in ABG Shipyard's account took place between 2005 and 2012, and the loan account turned into a non-performing asset (NPA) on November 30, 2013.

All the accused are accused of conspiring and committing illegal activities, including criminal breach of trust and misappropriation.

INTERVIEW | SHASHI SHEKHAR VEMPATI

'Expansion of DD Free Dish is priority'

The service is now concentrated in Hindi-speaking States, says Prasar Bharati CEO

DEVESH K. PANDEY

Prasar Bharati closed financial year 2021-2022 with a strong revenue growth of 13% from its commercial operations, at nearly ₹1,350 crore. The public broadcaster's Chief Executive Officer, **Shashi Shekhar Vempati**, *speaks about the factors driving revenue growth and future plans.*

What are the key factors for the strong revenue growth of Prasar Bharati?

■ It is mainly due to the growth in DD Free Dish revenue and a strong post-COVID-19 recovery in radio advertising revenues. Also, for the first time, our tower rental revenues touched ₹100 crore, which also contributed to the growth. Digital, while being a small source of revenue relatively, is growing at 30%.

DD Free Dish is now the largest direct-to-home platform, with a reach of more than 43 million homes. In which States has there been the most increase?

■ Free Dish is largely concentrated in the Hindi-speaking States, apart from Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa. We are working to expand Free Dish's footprint in non-Hindi States, and this will be a focus area in the coming years.

All content produced in-house is available for on-demand consumption on digital platforms

What have been the key decisions on the digital front?

■ Digital has been integral to all activities, with daily 800-plus digital uploads happening across the network. All in-house produced news and non-news content is available for on-demand consumption on digital platforms.

The NewsOnAir app has been a game-changer with 200+ live streams.

What are the future plans for expansion of Prasar Bharati's operations?

■ Expansion of Free Dish and FM radio will be the priorities going forward, apart from more digital content and newer formats of digital content. We will also be working on new avenues of monetisation, such as syndication of new and archival content.

Gadkari urges firms to recall defective EVs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

With several electric two-wheelers going up in flames, Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday urged manufacturers to take advance action to recall all defective vehicles, even as he said there was some problem with EV batteries when the temperature rose in March, April and May.

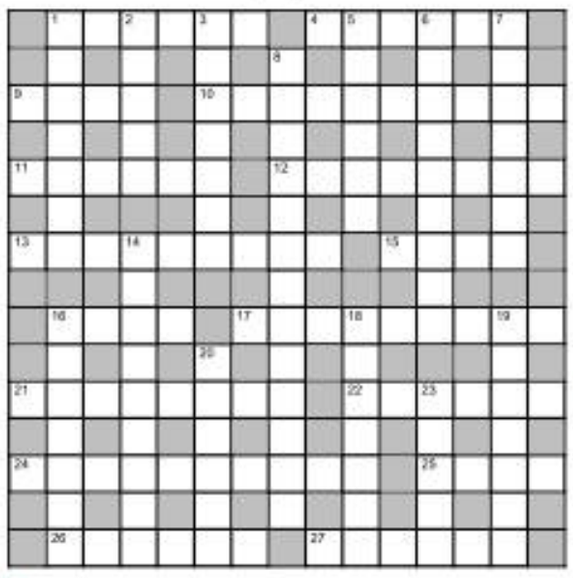
The Minister also acknowledged that the country's electric vehicle (EV) industry had "just started" and the government did not want to put up a hurdle. "But safety is the highest priority for the government," Mr. Gadkari said at the Raisina Dialogue here.

THE CROSSWORD + 13541

(set by Hypatia)

Display keystrokes of genius. Type your answers in our online grids. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



ACROSS

1 Get No. 1 bat to play (6)
4 Supply short garland for a communal gathering (6)
9 It's useful to make dough in Manhattan (4)
10 Drained lake into well to conform with regulations (4,2,4)
11 Paranoid about dropping an Apple accessory (6)
12 Noisily strip rug in fireplace, say (8)
13 Treat firm couple holding husband behind (9)
15 Zoom group (4)
16 God of two elements (4)
17 Equitable treatment in allotment? Sham, as per Spooner (4,5)
21 Contents of cat litter, perhaps? Extremely vile source of annoyance (3,5)
22 Revolting in Tibet? A tumult for change (6)
24 Arrange, sort, find and nearly substitute (5,2,3)
25 Festival starts to bring in harvest, usually (4)
26 Most unusual artist joins others (6)
27 Leaders from West enjoy bonuses and perks, posts in Facebook, say (3,3)

DOWN

1 Money lost by wealthiest person out of touch with reality (7)
2 Walk in region from South covering miles (5)
3 Sceptic's field? (7)
5 "Beast" shot in a mall? Mostly (6)
6 Writer's good novel sold with story, say (9)
7 Managed sovereign status (7)
8 It's impossible to gamble in real tables (3,4,3,3)
14 Handy tool for a prison warden (3,6)
16 Associate with a loud gambler (7)
18 Cut up with such regret moving Supreme Court (7)
19 Draw and drink going topless? That's saucy (7)
20 Deserts in summer, it seems (6)
23 Trip by Iran, frequently picking a bone (5)

SUDOKU

4		9				7	2	
			5		8			4
				9	4			
	7			4		6	3	
6								7
	1	4		3			8	
			9	6				
1			2		5			
	6	7				1		2

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13540

S	A	F	O	R	C	S	Z	
N	O	V	E	L	E	X	P	E
A	E	A	Y	K	P	U	S	
P	E	R	I	W	I	G	I	N
H	I	B	I	T				
		L	E	N	E			
C	O	N	C	E	R	N	E	D
R	O	G	U	E				
H	I	S		L		N	L	
A	C	C	U	S	E	R	E	N
G	R	A	V	E				
O	H		U		R	R	O	
S	P	E	A	R		B	O	B
M	A	R	L	E	Y			
		E	I	U	F			
A	R	S	E	N	I	C	D	E
F	U	N	C	T				
U	P	O	U	D	I	E	I	
T	H	R	O	W	I	N	T	H
E	T	O	W	E	L			
O	Y	N	D	A	I	T	L	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

7	5	6	8	3	2	4	9	1
9	4	1	7	6	5	3	8	2
2	3	8	1	4	9	5	6	7
5	9	4	3	7	6	2	1	8
8	7	3	9	2	1	6	5	4
6	1	2	4	5	8	9	7	3
1	6	5	2	8	3	7	4	9
4	2	9	5	1	7	8	3	6
3	8	7	6	9	4	1	2	5

FAITH

Sita's call for non-violence

The Aranya Kanda opens with Rama's promise to the rishis of Dandakaranya that He will protect them and will surely stop the molestations of the rakshasas. At this juncture, Sita wonders if He is doing the right thing by vowing to kill the rakshasas. She gently reminds Rama about upholding the dharma of non-violence, pointed out Sengalipuram Sri Balaji Bhattar in a discourse.

It is a fact that merely carrying the bow and arrow can be a cause for tempting one to use it. It might lead to the killing of innocent animals. Moreover, what is the need to kill the rakshasas if they do not come in their way directly, she asks.

She explains that there are subtle ways by which it is easy to commit wrong. Resorting to speaking untruth, desiring the wife of another man, and showing enmity to people without any valid provocation, are three common ways of adharma. While Rama is above the first two sins, she fears that He may slip into the third type. She then relates a story to illustrate her point.

It is held that Indra wanted to test the high degree of penance attained by a sage and came in the form of a warrior and asked him to take care of his sword for some time. The sage became conscious of his new commitment and gradually the strength of his penance declined to the extent that he got involved in acts opposed to his hermit's way of life. He sank to the depths of sinful deeds.

Rama accepts her argument but also is firm about His prime duty as a Kshatriya to help the rishis even without their asking. He has given His word and there is no question of going back on His commitment. He would give up Sita or Lakshmana or even His life to protect the good against the evil forces.

INTERVIEW | DALI YANG

'China has no easy exit strategy from zero-COVID'

Expert says there are both public health and political compulsions driving President Xi Jinping's hardline approach to fight the pandemic

ANANTH KRISHNAN
HONG KONG

For several weeks, Shanghai, China's financial centre, has been in a harsh lockdown, marked by food shortages as well as disruption in access to medical care. Despite widespread public anger over the measures, President Xi Jinping has said China's "dynamic zero-COVID" strategy will remain in place and cities need to curb outbreaks regardless of rising economic costs and high vaccination rates. **Dali Yang**, *professor of political science at the University of Chicago and a leading expert on China's political system, says in an interview there are both public health and political compulsions, and China faces no easy exit strategy while it still remains isolated from the world.*

How did the situation in Shanghai end up in such a crisis?

■ The big lesson from Wuhan was that even when you lock down, there are essential services that you have to keep running, along with logistics provisions. You want to make sure that people don't die from the lockdown itself. They need access to emergency medical services. Shanghai failed in making sure the logistics system continued to operate in a reasonably orderly manner. They tried to substitute it with the State, but there's a reason why the State cannot replace commercial platform companies. Those are efficient, have the management skills, the information, and so on. But they were largely immobilised for a while.

The city is still recovering from that situation. Under the order to quarantine everybody who is infected, they were putting numbers in the six figures into quarantine quarters at a time when they didn't have much space. It was a very messy situation, and in that process, they made some grave errors. For example, they lost a lot of public trust when there was this effort to bring toddlers in without them being accompanied by a parent. They later adjusted, but the loss of public trust was enormous. If they had the right people, someone should have said, 'This is crazy, you shouldn't be doing this.'

What have you made of the public response to the measures? We have seen an outpouring of anger on Chinese social media as well as much more criticism of zero-COVID than previously.

■ Generally, the public continues to support zero-COVID as far as I can see, but they are primarily in cities that are not affected by lockdowns! When you are in lockdown for three, four, five, weeks, and when you are struggling to gain access to food, spending hours on apps daily trying to get food, people are going to question the zero-COVID strategy. We've seen quite a number of people in Shanghai who have raised their voices and really raised serious questions about it. People are asking, if you say Chinese vaccines are so good, Chinese medicines are so good, then why can't you open up? The current lockdown is really revealing the massive costs of such an approach.

But there is no easy exit. Even if China decides to exit zero-COVID, there would still have to be a messy process. There would have to be efforts to mitigate the virus if it spreads rapidly. At the same time, more and more people are comparing the current variant with the flu.

Shanghai failed in making sure the logistics system continued to operate in a reasonably orderly manner. They tried to substitute it with the State, but there's a reason why the State cannot replace commercial platform companies

Despite all the politicisation in China that zero-COVID shouldn't be questioned, people continue to question it. With the situation in Shanghai, other cities are learning the lessons of Shanghai and they are doing a better job, such as Guangzhou. Local officials are much more proactive. However, that means they are not trying for a targeted approach anymore, and that is hurting the economy badly in the process. So it is not an easy situation in many ways.

The deaths among elderly, given low vaccination rates, is one major concern of opening. The state has the power to lock down, but why has it been unable to vaccinate the elderly?

■ Yes, the state has a lot of power. They worked hard last year to vaccinate mostly the people who were least at risk. With the elderly, it is more tricky, it's a social problem. The government worries if something happens with the elderly with side-effects what the families will do.

In Wuhan in 2020, China should have done autopsies from the very beginning, but guess how long it took them to get the first autopsy done? It was not until the middle of February that they finally secured agreement from a family to conduct the first autopsy.

So when it comes to the elderly and the deceased, there's a social issue and almost a kind of phobia about this in China. Similarly with vaccinations, the authorities are very careful in pushing it.

It also doesn't help that they don't let the people know the truth about, for example, how many deaths there are. To some extent, you need to get people scared and then they are willing to take vaccinations. At the moment, the approach in a lot of cities is to offer significant inducements to the elderly.

So what's the future for zero-COVID, if as you said, there is no perfect exit strategy?

■ If we take the case of Hong Kong, it only exited zero-COVID after the virus overran the system. So it was not an exit strategy per se, it was the natural progression of an outbreak.

What is remarkable is Singapore. Yes it was a little messy process but the capacity of the leadership in Singapore, particularly Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, is truly the best kind of leadership that you can find in terms of communicating with the public.

Here is the irony, The more vaccinated the population becomes, the more difficult it is to detect the virus, and therefore it's more likely to spread down the road. One thing they should definitely make sure is that essential services are not interrupted [as in Shanghai].

For example, Nanchang is doing a mini-lockdown at this point and announced that every family could send one person as a representative to buy supplies. You have to trust the people!

Besides the public health concerns such as elderly deaths, what about the politics of zero-COVID? Does the holding of the Party Congress later this year, when Xi will begin a third-term, impact the decision-making in terms of an exit?

■ Yes, absolutely. Especially when the Health Minister has explicitly and publicly said they want to create a good, conducive environment for the Party Congress. They have laid down the red line. Therefore, we are talking about another half a year of certainly vigorous responses. This does also mean a lot of the restrictions on international traffic, for example remaining in place. And after the Party Congress, it is winter season again. It's a very complicated situation. Ideally, you want to manage an exit in the summer, which makes it a little easier. Now, they will drag this out even further. And a lot of people are losing their patience.

U.S. hosts weapons summit as Moscow warns of world war

NATO, in essence, is engaged in a war with Russia through a proxy, says Lavrov

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
REUTERS
RAMSTEIN AIR BASE/MOSCOW

Desperate bid: Sergey Lavrov, right, and Antonio Guterres after their conference in Moscow, Russia, on Tuesday. • REUTERS

Top U.S. officials hosted emergency talks with allies in Germany on Tuesday on supplying Kyiv with more weapons to fend off Russia's assault, as the UN's chief headed to Moscow in a bid to avert further escalation of the conflict.

The meeting of 40 countries at the U.S. Ramstein Air Base in Germany comes after Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov accused Ukraine of only "pretending" to negotiate a cease-fire and warned of a "real" risk of a new world war.

Moscow's invasion of its neighbour, now in its eighth week, has triggered widespread outrage among Western nations who have provided weapons and other assistance to Ukraine's embattled President Volodymyr Zelensky.

"We believe that they can win if they have the right equipment, the right support," U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said following his visit to Kyiv on Sunday with Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

The two officials promised $700 million in new aid to Ukraine, after months of pleas by Mr. Zelensky for heavier firepower.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was asked on state TV about the prospect of World War Three and whether the current situation was comparable to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis that nearly caused nuclear war. "The risks now are considerable," he said, according to the Ministry's transcript of the interview.

"The danger is serious, real. And we must not underestimate it," Mr. Lavrov said. "NATO, in essence, is engaged in a war with Russia through a proxy and is arming that proxy. War means war." And Germany said it would begin supplying anti-aircraft tanks, a clear shift after refusing for weeks to provide more advanced equipment, and a sign that Berlin was abandoning its cautious approach towards Moscow.

Military specialists said Western allies wanted to equip Ukrainian forces to halt the long-range bombings by Russia in the eastern Donbas region.

Attack drones, anti-aircraft missiles and sophisticated intelligence from Western agencies could prove vital for slowing the advance of Russia's military might, they said.

But stoking fears of a wider conflict, several blasts were reported on Tuesday in the neighbouring ex-Soviet state of Moldova, in the Russian-backed separatist region of Transnistria.

In-person talks

In Moscow, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was to hold his first in-person talks with Mr. Putin since the fighting began on February 24.

"We are extremely interested in finding ways in order to create the conditions for effective dialogue, create the conditions for a ceasefire as soon as possible, create the conditions for a peaceful solution,"Mr. Guterres said at the start of talks with Mr. Lavrov. The UN's refugee agency said on Tuesday it now expects more than eight million Ukrainians will eventually flee their country, up from 5.2 million already.

Focused on diplomacy, not sanctions: Blinken

U.S. wants countries to voluntarily give up Russian oil rather than forcing them

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON DC

The U.S. is focused on voluntarily getting countries to move away from purchasing Russian oil at discounted prices and not imposing secondary sanctions now, Secretary of State Antony Blinken told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Tuesday, at a hearing on the FY2023 State Department Budget.

Questioned by Senator Chris van Hollen (Democrat, Maryland) on why the U.S. was not imposing secondary sanctions on countries purchasing Russian oil at a discount, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Mr. Blinken said that where preferable, the U.S. wanted to "get countries to voluntarily not engage" in the practice.

Imposing sanctions could also have the opposite of the desired effect, and end up being profitable for Russian President Vladimir Putin, the Secretary said.

"...We want to make sure that we are not taking actions in the near term that may have the result of spiking energy prices, and thus lining Putin's pockets instead of taking resources away," Mr. Blinked said.

China singled out

"We have to do it in a deliberate way so that we don't have an effect contrary to the one that we're trying to achieve," he said.

While China was singled out during this exchange, there was no direct mention of India. The U.S. has been pressuring India, which imports a few percentage points of its total energy import bill from Russia to not increase its purchases of oil from Moscow. New Delhi has purchased discounted oil from Moscow, with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman saying that India's national interest comes first and the country would buy fuel at lower prices, if available.

Countries will have to 'justify' veto votes at UN

Reform prompted by Ukraine invasion

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
UNITED NATIONS

The move mandates that the General Assembly convene within 10 days after a veto.

The 193 members of the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus on Tuesday a resolution requiring the five permanent members of the Security Council to justify their use of the veto.

The push for reform, which was greeted with applause in the chamber, was revived by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The measure is intended to make veto-holders United States, China, Russia, France and Britain "pay a higher political price" when they use the veto to strike down a Security Council resolution, said an ambassador who asked to remain anonymous.

It is unclear if the five permanent members will use the veto less, or more – as they could propose controversial texts they know their rivals will veto only to force them to justify their stance publicly.

First proposed more than two years ago, the measure provides for the General Assembly to be convened within 10 working days after a veto "to hold a debate on the situation as to which the veto was cast"..

Almost 100 countries joined Liechtenstein in co-sponsoring the reform, including the United States, Britain and France.

Neither Russia nor China were among the sponsors, though. A diplomat from one of the two countries, who asked not to be named, criticised the move, saying it will "divide" the UN even further.

Three Chinese among four killed in Pak. blast

Baloch Liberation Army stakes claim

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KARACHI

A woman suicide bomber from a Pakistan separatist group killed four persons, including three Chinese nationals, in an attack on a minibus carrying staff from a Beijing cultural programme at Karachi University on Tuesday.

The Baloch Liberation Army – one of several groups fighting for independence in Pakistan's biggest province – claimed responsibility, saying it was their first suicide attack by a woman assailant.

Opposed to BRI

Chinese targets have regularly been attacked by separatists from Balochistan, where Beijing is involved in huge infrastructure projects as part of its Belt and Road Initiative.

CCTV footage broadcast by local channels showed a woman standing near the gate of a Confucius Institute – the cultural programme that China operates at universities around the world – as a minibus pulls up.

When the vehicle gets to within a metre she turns her back on it and detonates a bomb strapped to her body.

Locals ignored

Baloch separatists have long harboured resentment against lucrative mining and energy projects in the region, saying locals do not see the benefits and are being pushed off their land.

The "Baloch Liberation Army accepts the responsibility of today's self-sacrificing attack", the group's spokesman, Jeeyand Baloch, said in a statement published in English on Telegram.

China's embassy in Islamabad said all three citizens killed in the attack were teachers at the institute, and that a fourth had been injured. It also warned its nationals to pay close attention to security and "not go out unless necessary".

Pakistan's new Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif immediately condemned the attack.

BusinessLine
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It takes a changemaker with great vision and courage to change the status quo, question norms and fight cynics. To be compassionate and brilliant in equal measure. They are the architects of a better future. To honour individuals and organisations who have improved lives around us, The Hindu BusinessLine presents The Changemaker Awards 2022.
Nominate yourself or someone truly deserving of this prestigious recognition. Together, let us celebrate changemakers.
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To nominate, log in to blchangemakers.com/nomination/ or scan the QR code. To know more, mail us at blchangemakers@thehindu.co.in

MARKET WATCH

	26-04-2022	% CHANGE
Sensex	57,357	1.37
US Dollar	76.56	0.10
Gold	51,452	-0.80
Brent oil	105.11	4.35

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	909.50	49.95
Apollo Hosp	4624.05	-52.00
Asian Paints	3125.65	-4.95
Axis Bank	775.00	-5.70
Bajaj Auto	3892.10	209.15
Bajaj Finserv	15434.35	169.30
Bajaj Finance	7240.55	235.05
Bharti Airtel	756.30	16.95
BPCL	372.85	3.15
Britannia Ind	3372.70	76.80
Cipla	978.40	25.25
Coal India	191.40	2.95
Divis Lab	4519.60	109.50
Dr Reddys Lab	4154.55	39.10
Eicher Motors	2649.30	55.15
Grasim Ind	1718.00	24.30
HCL Tech	1094.30	4.45
HDFC	2280.20	19.70
HDFC Bank	1372.05	6.30
HDFC Life	549.85	9.85
Hero MotoCorp	2407.25	118.65
Hindalco	493.45	-2.05
Hind Unilever	2148.35	47.60
ICICI Bank	753.75	1.55
Indusind Bank	980.45	33.90
Infosys	1581.00	19.90
ITC	258.95	3.70
JSW Steel	721.20	5.50
Kotak Bank	1742.70	13.85
L&T	1699.95	42.60
M&M	940.15	36.15
Maruti Suzuki	7906.75	-5.60
Nestle India Ltd.	18415.75	241.05
NTPC	157.00	0.90
ONGC	166.95	-2.70
PowerGrid Corp	231.60	8.75
Reliance Ind	2775.65	80.65
SBI Life	1094.85	3.60
State Bank	505.50	10.75
Shree Cement	26171.30	521.70
Sun Pharma	918.05	18.05
Tata Consumer Products Ltd	822.05	29.30
Tata Motors	434.90	9.75
Tata Steel	1233.60	13.25
TCS	3546.30	-1.90
Tech Mahindra	1275.45	5.05
Titan	2548.20	94.30
UltraTech Cement	6660.20	65.15
UPL	812.35	9.30
Wipro	529.25	-0.10

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on April 26

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	76.38	76.70
Euro	81.65	82.02
British Pound	97.16	97.57
Japanese Yen (100)	59.77	60.02
Chinese Yuan	11.68	11.73
Swiss Franc	79.70	80.07
Singapore Dollar	55.60	55.84
Canadian Dollar	59.94	60.22
Malaysian Ringitt	17.52	17.62
Australian Dollar	55.10	55.34

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF

Hyundai set to unveil 'IONIQ 5' EV in India

NEW DELHI

Korean carmaker Hyundai Motor India said it would bring its global all-electric crossover SUV 'IONIQ 5' to India in the second half of 2022, marking the beginning of the company's expansion plans for battery electric vehicles in India.

Isuzu Motors India names Nakano as president, MD

CHENNAI

Isuzu Motors India (IMI), a subsidiary of Isuzu Motors Ltd., Japan, has announced key changes in the top management. Wataru Nakano takes over as President and Managing Director and Toru Kishimoto as Deputy MD. Rajesh Mittal will assume the role of President of Isuzu Engineering Business Centre India and as Deputy President, IMI.

China, India add coal plants as global capacity addition dips 13%

China leads coal power expansion trailed by India, which aims to add 6,100 MW

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

China led global coal power expansion in 2021, with about 25,000 MW of new plants, followed by India with about 6,100 MW, reported the Global Energy Monitor which conducts an annual survey of coal power capacity under development or deployment. Worldwide, however, coal-plant capacity under development declined 13% last year.

After rising in 2020 for the first time since 2015, total coal power capacity under development slid last year to a record low of 457 gigawatts (GW), from 525 gigawatts.

Thirty-four countries are mulling new coal plants, down from 41 countries in January 2021. China, South Korea, and Japan have pledged to stop funding new coal plants in other countries, but China continued to lead globally in domestic development of new coal plants, commissioning more coal capacity than the rest of the world combined.

Firing up earth: Coal use needs to fall by 75% by 2030 to limit temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius. •REUTERS

In all, 45,000 MW of global coal power capacity – a little over half of which was from China – was commissioned in 2021 while 26,800 MW was retired, resulting in a net increase in the global coal fleet of 18,200 MW. In 2020, the net increase was 11,500 MW, which was the result of 56,800 MW of new capacity and 45,300 MW of global retirements.

Earlier this month the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said there was no carbon budget left for new coal plants, and added that coal use needed to fall by 75% by 2030 (from 2019 levels) to limit global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius, in line with the Paris Agreement.

'CBDT aims to lift tax-GDP ratio to 15-20% from the current 12%'

India logs record net direct tax revenue in FY22: Mohapatra

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHUBANESWAR

India's net direct tax collections amounted to ₹14,09,640.83 crore for FY22, which is the highest collection ever, signaling that the Indian economy has bounced back after two years of the pandemic, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Chairman J.B. Mohapatra said here on Tuesday.

"As against ₹14.09 lakh crore this year, our collection in 2020-21 was only ₹9.45 lakh crore. In a single year, we moved upward by nearly ₹4.5 lakh crore, registering a growth of 49%," said Mr. Mohapatra, addressing a press conference.

J.B. Mohapatra

"The collection... is the best-ever... as far as income tax and corporation tax are concerned."

Gross direct tax collections (before adjusting for refunds) grew 32.8% to ₹16,34,454.95 crore in FY22 compared with ₹12,31,270.52 crore in FY21.

"Increase in net and gross collection numbers is a major indication of the strengthening of the Indian economy. This gives the clearest signal that the Indian economy has bounced back after two pandemic years," Mr. Mohapatra said.

'60% of overall tax take'

"The direct tax-to-GDP ratio is around 12%," he added, noting that the CBDT was working to raise the ratio to 15-20% in 5-10 years.

"The direct tax collection this year has surpassed the indirect tax collection which was other way round till last year. It is now 52%... our aim is to look at 60% of tax contribution coming from direct taxes in some years," said the CBDT chairman.

'Scrap coal import duty to bolster power supply'

Need more rail rakes, says Assocham

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Assocham has made a case for duty-free import of coal, greater availability of railway rakes to transport the dry fuel and a different rate of diesel for captive generators for dealing with the power supply issue this summer.

"We urge States and discoms not to differentiate against commercial consumers in power supply. This is critical because growth in industrial production remains muted despite the overall economic recovery," the association's Secretary General Deepak Sood said in a statement.

Assocham has suggested key measures, including duty-free imports of coal along with increased availability of railway rakes for movement of coal and a differential rate of diesel for captive generator sets for tackling challenges of power supply in several States, amidst unprecedented early onset of heatwave conditions in several parts of the country.

"Although the import duty on coal is 2.5%, we would urge scrapping the duty for now in view of the pressing situation," he stated.

RIL, TA'ZIZ sign pact on EDC, PVC unit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Abu Dhabi Chemicals Derivatives Company RSC Ltd. (TA'ZIZ) and Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL), have signed a formal shareholders agreement for the TA'ZIZ EDC & PVC project, both companies said.

Reliance is a strategic partner with Abu Dhabi National Oil Company and ADQ in TA'ZIZ EDC & PVC, a world-scale chemicals development project at the TA'ZIZ Industrial Chemicals Zone in Ruwais.

The TA'ZIZ EDC and PVC joint venture would construct and operate a Chlor-Alkali, Ethylene Dichloride (EDC) and Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) production facility at a total investment of more than $2 billion.

Musk's free speech pitch may turn Twitter advertisers jittery

Microblogging site reported $4.51 bn in ad revenue for 2021

REUTERS

Advertisers could be reluctant to spend on Twitter if Elon Musk pushes ahead with plans to promote unfettered speech on the social media platform, analysts said, after the world's richest person clinched a deal to buy the firm for $44 billion.

Although Mr. Musk, a self-proclaimed free-speech absolutist, has not given details on how he plans to "improve and fix" Twitter, he has repeatedly called out the micro-blogging platform for not doing enough on free speech and criticised its content-moderation policies.

Advertising is Twitter's main source of revenue, and

analysts fear that unbridled free speech could spiral into misinformation and hate speech, potentially leading advertisers to dissociate themselves from the service.

Only about a 10th of the size of far larger social media platforms like Meta Platforms Inc.'s Facebook, Twitter has been credited with helping spawn the Arab Spring uprising and accused of playing a role in the storming of the U.S. Capitol.

"We expect advertisers will be less willing to spend on Twitter if Musk removes content moderation in order to promote free speech," MoffettNathanson analyst Michael Nathanson said. If he makes good on his promises, advertisers may shift to platforms like Youtube, Mr. Nathanson said.

The 16-year old company, which has more than 200 million users, reported $4.51 billion in ad revenue for 2021, accounting for about 89% of its overall sales.

Twitter was down 1.7% at $50.85 in morning trading.

'Twitter deal may test Tesla top-tier bench'

REUTERS
SAN FRANCISCO

Elon Musk's move to buy Twitter for $44 billion has raised concerns about the depth of executive talent at his more valuable company, electric carmaker Tesla Inc., in case his attention is further divided by the social media platform.

In announcing the deal on Monday, Mr. Musk talked about protecting free speech, but also rekindled fears that a man who last year talked of working "crazy hours" only has so much energy to spare.

"Tesla feels very much like a start-up despite it being a trillion-dollar company," said Tesla investor Ross Gerber, chief executive of wealth management firm Gerber Kawasaki.

Biocon unit bags $90-mn insulin deal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Biocon Biologics Limited (BBL), a subsidiary of Biocon, on Tuesday said it had bagged a three-year contract valued at $90 million from the Malaysian government for the supply of recombinant human insulin brand Insugen.

Biocon Sdn Bhd., a subsidiary of Biocon Biologics, will manufacture and supply its range of insulins to its partner Duopharma Marketing Sdn. Bhd. (DMktg), a subsidiary of Duopharma Biotech, a pharma & biotech firm in Malaysia, the Biocon unit said in a statement.

Signify Innovations eyes double-digit sales growth

Pent-up demand to aid offtake: Joshi

N. ANAND
CHENNAI

Signify Innovations India Ltd., (formerly Philips Lighting India Ltd.) is expecting double-digit sales growth during calendar year 2022.

"We not only achieved the pre-pandemic sales growth level in the third quarter of CY21 but also exceeded CY19 sales," said Sumit Joshi, CEO & MD, South Asia.

"Due to pent-up demand, opening up of the economy and government spending on infrastructure projects, we are expecting 18-20% growth this year. In the first three months, we posted

Sumit Joshi

25% growth," he said.

Flagging the headwinds including the Ukraine-Russia conflict, inflation in India, the pandemic in China and component shortage, he said India could tide over the challenges as it was a consumer-driven market.

White goods PLI attracts 19 more firms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for white goods has attracted fresh interest from 19 more companies who have applied to undertake investments worth ₹1,548 crore to manufacture LED lights and AC components.

The Commerce and Industry Ministry said they aim to achieve a combined production of about ₹26,880 crore over the next five years, creating 5,522 direct jobs. The government had earlier approved 42 firms with a committed investment of ₹4,614 crore.

'Battery fire incidents likely to slow EV adoption'

'Fear factor may trounce benefits'

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

Recent incidents of electric vehicles (EVs) catching fire are bound to create speed bumps in EV adoption, according to industry officials.

"Currently, many new-age players are engaging in wrong practices by selling battery powered EVs without following proper protocols," said Uday Narang, founder and chairman, Omega Seiki Mobility.

"This is giving a bad name to players who had done in-depth research before introducing their EVs," he added. "Once fear kicks in into consumers' minds, no advantage will attract them to buy EVs," he said.

According to Dr. Yogesh Kumar Sharma, Associate Professor, IIT Roorkee, the foremost reason for an EV battery catching fire is the "volatility of electrolyte and its extra reactivity in a charged state."

Quality control

Akash Soni, co-founder and CEO, Indi Energy, a start-up that develops batteries said, "EV fire incidents can also happen due to lack of battery/EV quality control checks, and not following safety protocols as per international standards."

Webinar on export credit insurance

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

ECGC Ltd. and *The Hindu* will jointly host a webinar on 'The importance of export credit insurance for MSME exporters in post-COVID trade' on April 28 at 4 p.m. The panelists include: M. Senthilnathan, CMD, ECGC Ltd., Dr. A. Sakthivel, president, FIEO, and Ramesh Rajah, president Coffee Exporters' Association, and chairman, Ramesh Exports Pvt. Ltd. To register, visit https://bit.ly/ECGCMSME or scan the QR code.

SPORT

From Chris Gayle to Lasith Malinga, a fantasy team to take on the best

Picking an all-time T20 XI calls for a distinct approach; in the shorter format, statistics is everything and best players sometimes don't make it

BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

Picking the best all-time teams is one of the pleasures of sports fandom. Not even Don Bradman could resist the temptation to pick his best Test XI.

But an all-time T20 XI is different in texture and calls for a distinct approach. In the shorter format, statistics is everything. In the longest it is only one of the things; balance is the key. The best players sometimes don't make it because of this.

There is probably no place in a T20 team for poor fielders or too many pure bowlers. And once you bring in Lasith Malinga and Rashid Khan, that pretty much shuts the door on most bowlers.

Recency bias might mean including Jasprit Bumrah, for instance, or Sunil Narine, and there is no way of being absolutely sure that they might not be better than the first two. But that's the fun of imaginary teams – uncertainty is built into the process.

The fact that we can speak airily of recency bias means that the game is equally susceptible to its opposite: the 'good old days' fallacy perhaps.

The sport is nearly two decades old, but *only* two decades old which means that a whole generation, perhaps two, has moved on.

It also means that players who adapted quickly in the early years stood out from among their contemporaries before the availability of greater information and better analytical skills meant that performances in the format as a whole improved overall.

The paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould saw this as 'declining variation', arguing that 'systems equilibrate as they improve'. He was obsessed with baseball and worked the figures from there, but the principle is the same here too.

Anyway, to get back to our team. At the top there can be little dispute. Christopher Henry Gayle was for years the hardest hitting and most consistent opening batman.

He gave of his talent to 26 teams across six countries as ambassador of a sport not many were sure of in the early years. He was the first to ten thousand runs and hit more sixes and more boundaries than anybody else. Long before he retired he was already being called the Bradman of T20.

Kohli as opener

Accompanying him would be Virat Kohli, who for long averaged over fifty (admittedly averages mean nothing here) and was known as the King of the Chase.

He will have to be cautious about running between wickets with Gayle though, as the latter prefers to stay at home and swing for the rafters.

Captain's dream

At number three, we would have A.B. de Villiers, the original 360-degree batsman, still the most creative striker the format has seen.

A brilliant fielder and runner between the wickets, he is the captain's dream. He is one of only two batsman in the list of top ten scorers with a strike rate of over 150.

The other, Kieron Pollard, would bat at five. Pollard has the third best aggregate and 300-plus wickets, besides.

In between, we would have David Warner for his intelligent batting and strike rate. He may love to open, but playing him at four gives us a chance to have a left-right combination both at the top and in the middle.

At six it will be Glen Maxwell, who one of these days is likely to clear the stadium with one swing of the bat, and at seven Andre Russell, who might do that earlier!

Russell has a strike rate of nearly 170 over 400-plus matches, and 364 wickets besides, making him the finest all-round player around.

Dhoni factor

None of these batting positions is etched in rock. Flexibility is the key in T20 cricket. Which is why Mahendra Singh Dhoni coming in at No. 8 is a convenience rather than a necessity.

The middle order can be shuffled around depending on the flow of the game and the form of the day.

Dhoni at eight also means the earlier batsmen have the freedom to go for broke knowing he can pick up the pieces. Meanwhile, waiting in the dugout is Dwayne Bravo, he of 583 wickets and 6700 runs, and a restrictive bowler too.

Strike rates in bowling don't really matter since no wicket for 10 runs in four overs is better than two wickets for fifty.

At ten and eleven come our pure bowlers, leg spinner Rashid Khan and Lasith Malinga. This team can call upon four others and Gayle if he is in the mood.

Missing out

To leave out Rohit Sharma, Jos Buttler, Shakib Al Hassan, Sunil Narine, Shahid Afridi, Shane Watson and some great fast bowlers, including Dale Steyn is a wrench, but cannot be avoided.

In fact, it may be possible to pick another eleven as good without too much effort. Those who will be known in future as the greats of T20 game have begun emerging in recent years.

IN BRIEF

Celtics sweep Nets out of NBA playoffs

NEW YORK

Jayson Tatum scored 29 points as Boston Celtics completed a 4-0 series sweep of Brooklyn Nets in the NBA playoffs with a 116-112 victory on Monday. Toronto stunned the Philadelphia 76ers 103-88 to keep their series alive while Dallas thrashed Utah to take a 3-2 lead.

The results: EC: Boston 116 bt Brooklyn 112. *Boston wins 4-0*; Philadelphia 88 lost to Toronto 103. *Philadelphia leads 3-2*; **WC:** Dallas 102 bt Utah 77. *Dallas leads 3-2*. AFP

Juventus manages a win

ROME

Moise Kean's late goal gave Juventus a hard-fought 2-1 win at Sassuolo in Serie A on Monday, allowing it to close the gap on third-placed Napoli to one point.

The result: Sassuolo 1 (Raspadori 39) lost to Juventus 2 (Dybala 45, Kean 88). AFP

Parag, bowlers combine to give RR a comfortable win over RCB

The middle-order batter repays the team-management's faith with a quickfire fifty; Sen, Ashwin and Prasidh strike and stifle the Bengaluru side

IPL 2022

ASHWIN ACHAL

Kuldeep Sen (4/20) and R. Ashwin (3/17) put the skids on Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) to give Rajasthan Royals a 29-run win in an IPL fixture at the MCA Stadium, Pune on Tuesday.

Kohli fails again

Set a moderate target of 145, RCB stumbled to 115, and fell to a second consecutive loss. RCB and India star Virat Kohli fell for a low score yet again, prised out for nine, this time by fast bowler Prasidh Krishna. Fellow-pacer Sen then broke RCB's back by taking the wickets of skipper Faf du Plessis (23) and Glenn Maxwell (0) in the seventh over.

Ashwin then got into the act, reducing RCB to 92 for seven. Dinesh Karthik, so crucial to RCB's fortunes, was run out for six. Wanindu Hasaranga (18, 13b, 2x4) tried to take the attacking route, but when he was sent back by Sen, it was game over.

Fighting total

After being put in to bat, RR rode on an unbeaten 56 from Riyan Parag to record a fighting total. RR did not have the best of starts, falling to 33 for three inside the PowerPlay.

Opener Jos Buttler, who entered the fixture with two consecutive centuries to his name, failed to make an impact.

Australian pacer Josh Hazlewood took the key wicket, with a skiddy good-length ball that surprised Buttler.

The England hitter was caught on the crease, and his hurried pull shot was smartly caught by Mohammed Siraj at mid-on.

Siraj was impressive with the ball as well, dismissing Devdutt Padikkal (7) and R. Ashwin (17). Siraj trapped Padikkal on the pads with a searing full delivery, before taking out Ashwin with a sharp short ball.

Sanju Samson (27, 21b, 1x4, 3x6) and Daryl Mitchell (16, 24b) got together for a 35-run fourth-wicket stand. Mitchell could not get going, and holed out to long-on. Skipper Samson's attempted reverse-sweep off Sri Lankan spinner Hasaranga resulted in the batter losing his stumps.

Hasaranga picked up his second scalp when Shimron Hetmyer's slog-sweep sailed high to fielder Suyash Prabhudessai.

Parag rescued RR with a late cameo. Parag provided the fireworks in the death overs, bowled by Hazlewood and Harshal Patel. Hazlewood conceded 12 runs in the 19th over, while Harshal was tonked by Parag for 18 runs – including two sixes – in the final over.

Parag recorded his first fifty of this IPL season. The Assam cricketer was under pressure after a poor run thus far, with a highest score of only 18 before this fixture. He made most of a life offered by Hasaranga, who dropped a sitter earlier in the knock.

Parag and Harshal were involved in a heated verbal exchange at the end of the RR innings. It took the intervention of teammates to calm things down.

Stellar shows: Parag's blitz lifted Rajasthan Royals before Sen's four-wicket haul sealed the team's win. • SPORTZPICS/IPL

SCOREBOARD

RAJASTHAN ROYALS

Jos Buttler c Siraj b Hazlewood 8 *(9b, 1x4)*, Devdutt Padikkal lbw b Siraj 7 *(7, 1x6)*, R. Ashwin c & b Siraj 17 *(9b, 4x4)*, Sanju Samson b Hasaranga 27 *(21b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Daryl Mitchell c Maxwell b Hazlewood 16 *(24b)*, Riyan Parag (not out) 56 *(31b, 3x4, 4x6)*, Shimron Hetmyer c Prabhudessai b Hasaranga 3 *(7b)*, Trent Boult c Kohli b Harshal 5 *(7b)*, Prasidh Krishna run out 2 *(5b)*, Yuzvendra Chahal (not out) 0 *(0b)*; Extras (w-3): 3; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 144.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-11 (Padikkal, 1.4 overs), 2-33 (Ashwin, 3.6), 3-33 (Buttler, 4.1), 4-68 (Samson, 9.3), 5-99 (Mitchell, 14.2), 6-102 (Hetmyer, 15.3), 7-110 (Boult, 17.1), 8-121 (Prasidh, 18.4).

RCB BOWLING

Shahbaz 3-0-35-0, Siraj 4-0-30-2, Hazlewood 4-1-19-2, Hasaranga 4-0-23-2, Harshal 4-0-33-1, Maxwell 1-0-4-0

ROYAL CHALLENGERS

Virat Kohli c Parag b Prasidh 9 *(10b, 2x4)*, Faf du Plessis c Buttler b Sen 23 *(21b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Rajat Patidar b Ashwin 16 *(16b, 1x6)*, Glenn Maxwell c Padikkal b Sen 0 *(1b)*, Shahbaz Ahmed c Parag b Ashwin 17 *(27b, 1x6)*, Suyash Prabhudessai c Parag b Ashwin 2 *(7b)*, Dinesh Karthik run out 6 *(4b, 1x4)*, Wanindu Hasaranga c & b Sen 18 *(13b, 2x4)*, Harshal Patel c Parag b Sen 8 *(11b, 1x6)*, Mohd. Siraj c Sen b Prasidh 5 *(5b, 1x4)*, Josh Hazlewood (not out) 0 *(2b)*; Extras (b-1, lb-4, w-6): 11; Total (in 19.3 overs): 115.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-10 (Kohli, 1.4 overs), 2-37 (du Plessis, 6.2), 3-37 (Maxwell, 6.3), 4-58 (Patidar, 9.6), 5-66 (Prabhudessai, 11.4), 6-72 (Karthik, 12.4), 7-92 (Shahbaz, 15.4 ov), 8-102 (Hasaranga, 16.4), 9-107 (Siraj, 17.4).

ROYALS BOWLING

Boult 3-0-20-0, Prasidh 4-0-23-2, R. Ashwin 4-0-17-3, Sen 3.3-0-20-4, Mitchell 1-0-7-0, Chahal 4-0-23-0.

Toss: RCB; **MoM:** Parag.

Rajasthan Royals won by 29 runs.

Innings scan

RR		RCB
51	Dots	67
9	Fours	9
8	Sixes	4
43/3	PP	37/1
7.20	RR	5.89

Next assignment

RCB: Apr. 30 vs. **GT**
Brabourne, 3.30 p.m.

RR: Apr. 30 vs. **MI**
DY Patil, 7.30 p.m.

Titans and Sunrisers in a power battle

Hardik's explosive hitters will be tested by fiery attack at Williamson's disposal

S. DINAKAR
MUMBAI

It will be 'Power Play' at the Wankhede Stadium on Wednesday.

The power-hitters of Gujarat Titans will face-off against the powerful pace attack of Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Tata-Indian Premier League.

GT has dished out a refreshing brand of cricket under Hardik Pandya who has turned out the surprise packet as a captain with his smart moves.

Hardik, himself a force as a pace bowling all-rounder, understands the dynamics of T20 cricket where an over of poor cricket can cost you the match.

The levels of intensity need to be high throughout. A slip and the fall can be steep.

Graceful opener

GT has the graceful opener Shubman Gill who can guide the team deep into the innings. He times the ball through the gaps.

And the Gujarat side has an explosive bunch of ball strikers with Hardik, David Miller, Rahul Tewatia and Abhinav Manohar. Asking rate doesn't matter.

Threatening pace pair

And the genuinely quick Lockie Ferguson and the skilful Mohammed Shami form a threatening pace pair.

And versatile leg-spinner Rashid Khan will be up against his old team SRH. He would want to prove a point.

Kane Williamson leads an SRH team that can sting with its pace attack.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Marco Jansen, Umran Malik and T. Natarajan, with their pace, two-way movement and left-arm right-arm angles can demolish line-ups.

And SRH has the batting with Williamson, Abhishek Sharma, Rahul Tripathi, Nicholas Pooran and Aiden Markram adding weight.

The duel promises to be intriguing.

Shootout: It could be an absorbing duel between red-hot Umran and classy Gill. • SPORTZPICS/IPL

TODAY'S MATCH

GUJARAT TITANS vs. SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

WANKHEDE, 7.30 P.M.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 1
GT 0 | SRH 1

PREVIOUS MEETING
SRH won by eight wickets, 2022

STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD)

'We could've stolen it in the end'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Stephen Fleming is a cool customer, whether in victory or defeat. Monday night did not go well for the Chennai Super Kings coach.

His team lost a pulsating duel to Punjab Kings. The difference between the two sides in the end were two hits.

Asked why M.S. Dhoni did not surface earlier in the order particularly when skipper Ravindra Jadeja was struggling, Fleming replied, "The batting order is the captain's prerogative. It was a case of a left-hander coming in too."

The CSK coach added, "We've had discussions and concluded that the best time for Dhoni to come is around the 15th over. But then, Jadeja too has played some important innings for us over the last two years in the end overs. You cannot judge a player in one or two innings."

Fleming conceded Punjab Kings was ahead in the game but noted, "We could have stolen it [the game] in the end."

About the injury to Ambati Rayudu's hand that forced him not to field for much of the Punjab Kings' innings, Fleming said, "It was under the hand, he took ice packs, pain killers and the area was bandaged well. He was able to come back and play a very good innings."

On the ankle injury to Moeen Ali, Fleming said the team was awaiting the scan results. "He could be out for at least a week."

About blooding the young and exciting pace bowling all-rounder Rajvardhan Hangargekar, Fleming said, "Speed can cut both ways. From under-19 to IPL is a level up. We do not want to destroy his confidence. We want to groom him."

Fleming. • SPORTZPICS/IPL

POINTS TABLE

Team	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	8	6	2	12	0.561
Gujarat Titans	7	6	1	12	0.396
Sunrisers Hyderabad	7	5	2	10	0.691
Lucknow Super Giants	8	5	3	10	0.334
Royal Challengers Bangalore	9	5	4	10	-0.572
Punjab Kings	8	4	4	8	-0.419
Delhi Capitals	7	3	4	6	0.715
Kolkata Knight Riders	8	3	5	6	0.080
Chennai Super Kings	8	2	6	4	-0.538
Mumbai Indians	8	0	8	0	-1.000

AFTER THE RCB-RR MATCH ON APRIL 26

Satwik & Chirag advance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MANILA

India's top doubles pairing of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty cruised into the second round of the Badminton Asia Championships with a 21-13, 21-9 over the Thai pair of Apiluk Gaterahong and Natchanon Tulamok here on Tuesday.

The World No. 7 and third-seeded Indian duo hardly broke a sweat to win in 27 minutes.

The results (first round):

Men's doubles: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty bt Apiluk Gaterahong & Natchanon Tulamok (Tha) 21-13, 21-9; Krishna Prasad Garaga & Vishnuvardhan Goud Panjala lost to Kang Min-hyuk & Kim Won-ho (Kor) 10-21, 21-19, 16-21; Fajar Alfian & Muhammad Ardianto (Ina) bt M.R. Arjun & Dhruv Kapila 21-16, 24-22.

Mixed doubles: Ishaan Bhatnagar & Tanisha Crasto bt Law Cheuk Him & Yeung Nga Ting (HK) 21-15, 21-17; Praveen Jordan & Melati Oktavianti (Ina) bt Venkat Gaurav Prasad & Juhi Dewangan 21-9, 21-13.

Elvera Britto passes away

An Arjuna Awardee, she was the captain of the Indian hockey team

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

Celebrated women's hockey player and administrator Elvera Britto passed away here on Tuesday. She was 81. An outstanding player and champion of women's hockey, Elvera was the captain of the Indian and then Mysore teams.

She led Mysore State to the Senior national title for eight consecutive years, from 1960 to 1967. Elvera, alongside her sisters Rita and Mae, formed a formidable trio for the State and Indian teams.

She received the Arjuna Award in 1965.

After her playing career, Elvera was the government nominee in the National Selection Committee for over a decade. She also served as the president of the Karnataka State Women's Hockey Association for two terms.

Undying commitment

Former India men's hockey captain Jude Felix recalled Elvera's undying commitment to improving the state of women's hockey. "Every time I met her, I was amazed at her passion for women's hockey. She felt that women did not get the same opportunities as men in the sport, and she always tried to make things better for women's hockey. She was very happy that our academy – Jude Felix Hockey Academy – included girls in our programme. In fact, she even made a donation to our academy. She was a lady of action, not words," Felix told *The Hindu*.

Elvera Britto. • THE HINDU ARCHIVES

"I did not get the chance to see her play, but our seniors always spoke very highly of her skills. During a recent interaction with Elvera, she spoke at length about the forgotten skill of using the reverse stick. Her technical knowledge amazed me," Felix said.

The Karnataka State Hockey Association (KSHA) condoled her demise.

SRM volleyball teams corner glory

Jain University swimmers win four gold medals

KHELO VARSITIES

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

SRM University clinched the men's and women's volleyball titles at the Khelo India University Games here on Tuesday.

In the men's final, SRM upset University of Calicut 25-22, 25-23, 25-19 to lift the trophy. Calicut had won gold in the All India Inter University in 2021, where SRM had finished third.

In the women's summit clash, SRM put it past Bharathiar University 25-14, 25-22, 25-14 to seal its dominance. It went unbeaten through the competition, adding the KIUG title to the All India inter-university crown from last year.

In swimming, host Jain University continued to impress, picking up four of the ten golds on offer. The university's badminton teams also came good, entering the final in both the men's and women's team events.

In boxing, Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay Shekhawati University's Muskan scored an upset win over Vinka in the women's 57-60kg category semifinals. Vinka, representing Kurukshetra University, was the favourite, courtesy of her gold medal at the AIBA Youth World Championships in 2021.

Champion: The triumphant SRM University volleyball team. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results (winners all):

Swimming: Men: 1500m freestyle: Shubham Dhaygude (Savitribai Phule), 16:21.96 (NMR; Old: 17:55.16, Shaunak Prasade, Bhubaneshwar, 2020); **50m breaststroke:** Danush Suresh (Anna), 28.90 (NMR; Old: 29.57, Ansh Arora, Bhubaneshwar, 2020); **50m butterfly:** Adithya Dinesh (Anna), 25.49; **200m butterfly:** Aryan Panchal (Gujarat), 2:04.72 (NMR; Old: 2:09.88, Vinayak Parihar, Bhubaneshwar, 2020); **200m backstroke:** Siva Sridhar (Jain), 2:06.29 (NMR; Old: 2:08.82, Anurag Dagar, Bhubaneshwar, 2020); **4x100m freestyle:** Jain, 3:34.86 (NMR; Old: 3:46.14, Panjab University, Bhubaneshwar, 2020).

Women: 50m breaststroke: Aarti Patil (Mumbai), 34.95 (NMR; Old: 36.28, Aarti Patil, Bhubaneshwar, 2020); **50m butterfly:** Rujuta Khade (Shivaji) 29.16, (NMR; Old: 29.74, Aarya Rajguru, Bhubaneshwar, 2020); **200m backstroke:** Shrungi Bandekar (Jain), 2:27.27 (NMR; Old: 2:36.32, Damini Gowda, Bhubaneshwar, 2020); **400m IM:** Kalyani Saxena (Veer Narmad South Gujarat), 5:24.40 (NMR; Old: 5:24.78, Kalyani Saxena, Bhubaneshwar, 2020).

Shooting: Men: Trap individual: Arav Singh Dagar (Panjab) 31 bt Jungsher Virk (Punjabi) 30; **Trap team:** Punjabi 324; **Women: 10m Air Rifle:** Shailaja Patel (Swarnim Gujarat Sports) 16 bt Atmika Gupta (Rajasthan Technical) 10; **10m Air Rifle team:** Panjab University, Chandigarh, 1878.6 points; **Trap individual:** N. Neeru (Guru Nanak Dev) 31 bt Mahima Vishwakarma (Barkatullah) 28; **Trap team:** Delhi 296.

Volleyball (final) Men: SRM bt Calicut 25-22, 25-23, 25-19; **Women:** SRM bt Bharathiar 25-14, 25-22, 25-14.

Mallakhamba: Women's team: Mumbai 86.45 (Pole Mallakhamba 42.70; **Rope Mallakhamba** 43.75)

Badminton (semifinals): Men's team: SRM bt Punjabi 3-1; Jain bt Savitribai Phule 3-0; **Women's team:** Madurai Kamaraj bt Osmania University 2-1; Jain bt SRM 2-0.

TV PICKS

Khelo India Games: DD Sports, 6.30 a.m.
NBA: Sports 18, Vh1, Voot Select, Jio TV & MTV, 7.30 a.m.
IPL 2022: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m.
Champions League: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Thursday)

Carlsen blanks Praggnanandhaa

World champ joins teenager in lead

CHESS

SPORTS BUREAU

World champion Magnus Carlsen dominated and destroyed R. Praggnanandhaa 3-0 in their much-anticipated fourth round clash to join the teenager in the lead at nine points in the Oslo Esports Cup online rapid chess tournament in Oslo on Monday.

Playing white, Carlsen won the first game in 76 moves to set the pace. In the second, Praggnanandhaa appeared comfortable till the 25th before erring in judgement. Over the 13 moves, Carlsen punished his younger rival in a clinical manner.

Facing a must-win situation in the third game, Praggnanandhaa overstepped the line of caution on the 24th move with a rook-move and Carlsen converted to his advantage. After 35 moves, when Carlsen was about to deliver a checkmate, Praggnanandhaa resigned.

Among the other matches, Le Quang Liem recovered from Sunday's loss to Praggnanandhaa with a fluent victory over Eric Hansen. Jorden van Foreest won the 'Dutch Derby' by beating Anish Giri in the two blitz games, much like Jan-Krzysztof Duda did against Shakhriyar Mamedyarov.

- Le Quang Liem recovered from Sunday's loss to Praggnanandhaa with a fluent victory over Eric Hansen

The results (fourth round): Magnus Carlsen (Nor, 9) bt R. Praggnanandhaa (9) 3-0; Jan-Krzysztof Duda (Pol, 7) bt Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (Aze, 4) 4-2 (Duda won the two blitz tiebreak games); Eric Hansen (Can, 3) lost to Le Quang Liem (Vie, 6) 0.5-2.5; Jorden van Foreest (Ned, 5) bt Anish Giri (Ned, 5) 4-2 (Foreest won the two blitz games).

India goes down to Japan

Doubles team loses in straight sets in the decider

WJT

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

A good effort: India ran second seed Japan close before tumbling to a defeat. • KAMESH SRINIVASAN

India ran second seed Japan close before tumbling to a 1-2 defeat in the league stage of the Asia-Oceania World Junior Tennis under-14 boys' tournament at the DLTA Complex on Tuesday.

Tanussh Ghildyal infused hope in the Indian camp by beating one of the best talent on view, Ryo Tabata 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 in the second singles.

Aditya Mor had given a good account of himself earlier, even though he lost 6-2, 7-6(3) to Ren Matsumura. In the decisive doubles, Aditya Mor and Arnav Paparkar fought brilliantly against Matsumura and Tabata, but missed their chances at crucial stages in bowing to a straight set loss. The Indian duo had fought back from being down 1-4 in the second set, and was in the driver's seat at 4-4, 40-0 on serve, before crashing to defeat.

India has to win its last league match against Jordan, so as to qualify as the second best team from the group for the quarterfinals. If it accomplishes the task, it will meet one of the group toppers.

The results:

Group-A: Australia bt Lebanon 3-0; Korea bt Syria 3-0.

Group-B: Japan bt India 2-1 (Ren Matsumura bt Aditya Mor 6-2, 7-6(3); Ryo Tabata lost to Tanussh Ghildyal 6-3, 4-6, 4-6; Matsumura & Tabata bt Aditya Mor & Arnav Paparkar 7-5, 6-4); Jordan bt Uzbekistan 3-0.

Group-C: Thailand bt Malaysia 3-0; Hong Kong bt Iran 3-0.

Group-D: Kazakhstan bt Sri Lanka 3-0; Indonesia bt Pakistan 3-0.

Djokovic will be allowed to play at Wimbledon

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON

Novak Djokovic will be allowed to defend his title at Wimbledon, despite not being vaccinated against COVID-19, because the shots are not required to enter Britain, All England Club chief executive Sally Bolton said on Tuesday.

Serb Djokovic, ranked No. 1, missed the Australian Open in January after being deported from that country because he was not vaccinated. During the annual spring briefing ahead of Wimbledon, which starts on June 27, Bolton said that "whilst, of course, it is encouraged" that all players get vaccinated, "it will not be a condition of entry."

Prajnesh moves up

SPORTS BUREAU

Prajnesh Gunneswaran defeated Calvin Hemery of France 7-6(10), 4-6, 6-3 in the first round of the $53,120 Challenger tennis tournament at Morelos (Mexico).

Other results: €45,730 Challenger, Rome: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Jasper De Jong & Bart Stevens (Ned) bt Sriram Balaji & Vishnu Vardhan 7-6(5), 6-2.

$15,000 ITF men, Chiang Rai, Thailand: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Omar Jasika (Aus) & Chanchai Sookton-Eng (Tha) bt Dominik Palan (Cze) & Adil Kalyanpur 6-3, 6-4.

$25,000 ITF women, Monastir, Tunisia: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Sakura Hosogi & Himeno Sakatsume (Jpn) bt Milana Zhabrailova (Rus) & Sahaja Yamalapalli 6-3, 6-0.

$15,000 ITF women, Chiang Rai (first round): Punnin Kovapitukted (Tha) bt Vaidehi Chaudhari 6-3, 2-0 (retired).

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Suman nets two goals

Suman scored a brace as Universal FC beat Bentex FC 2-0 in the BDFA C-division football league on Tuesday.

The results:

Jolly Bros 0 bt Shining Star 0 [4-2 on penalties]; ECD 1 (Aryan Joshi 39) bt Freedom 1 (Abhisek 43) [5-4 on penalties]; Veterans 1 (Raghavendra 25) bt JP Sports 0; Universal 2 (Suman 25, 53) bt Bentex 0; ITC 1 (Santhosh 6) bt ISRO 0; Tornadoes 1 (Sachin 33) bt Konkan 0; Bangalore Warriors 4 (Md. Favas 46, Bharath Rai 47, Surya 50, Jackie Sunil 68) bt Rovers 1 (Rahul 41).

Hat-trick by Yeshwanth

Yeshwanth's hat-trick was instrumental in Bangalore Super Strikers' 6-0 victory over United Aces FC in the KSFA C-division league on Tuesday.

The results:

Bangalore Super Strikers 6 (Dinesh Kumar 4, Asker 7, Yeshwanth 25, 30, 53, Harish 41) bt United Aces 0; Technico Football Foundation 3 (Ajshya 22, 76, Akash 53) bt Rush 1 (J.B. Trishanth 16); Play Smart 6 (Lokesh 2, 11, Sharan Babu 27, 40, Premkumar Venkadesan 37, Pranesh Raj 59) bt Legendary 0.

Paarth and Karnika shine

Paarth Madan's three for four and Karnika's unbeaten 40 helped Six Cricket Academy register a thumping nine-wicket win over Just Cricket in an under-12 category match in the Tiger Cup cricket tournament on Tuesday.

The scores:

U-14: Just Cricket 155/3 in 30 overs (Ayaan 77) lost to Six CA 156/4 in 24.1 overs (Rithesh 31, Dhruv Krishnan 55).

U-12: Just Cricket 109 in 27.3 overs (Paarth Madan 3/4) lost to Six CA 110/1 in 14.1 overs (Karnika 40 n.o.).

State athletics meet in early May

The Karnataka Athletics Association will conduct the State senior and junior athletics meet on May 7 and 8 at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium.

The event will also act as the trials to select the State teams for the National inter-State senior championships to be held in Chennai from June 10 to 14. Entries close on May 3

Call: A. Rajavelu on 94484 38276.

Champions Chess Academy's annual camp

Champions Chess Academy will conduct an annual camp on May 7 in Krishna Garden, Rajarajeshwari Nagar. Sessions will run every Saturday and Sunday, both in-person and online. Call Balakrishna Prabhu on 98454 66416.

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